

MAPPING MORTALITY



The Persistence of Memory
and Melancholy in
Early Modern England

WILLIAM E. ENGEL



This book is a cultural study of the ways men and women in early modern England confronted, accommodated, and paid tribute to mortal life and certain death. Drawing on

prose and poetry, painting and statuary, social practices and religious rites, William Engel reopens central questions about Renaissance habits of thought. He explores how the metaphors of that period signaled and enacted a continual revelation of mortality: the death of the body (figured as a kind of vehicle) and the eternity of the soul (that which was to be transported).

Engel argues that early modern metaphors was essentially mnemonic and emblematic, grounding itself in the relation of body and soul. Building on the work of Benjamin, Heidegger, Derrida, Baudrillard, and Eliade, the book provides contemporary readers with a key for recovering and understanding the critical assumptions underlying a mnemonically oriented principle of aesthetics.

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Mapping Mortality

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Memory and Melancholy
in Early Modern England

WILLIAM E. ENGEL

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To Ruth and Marvin Engel
In remembrance of the Fifth Commandment

I witness with pleasure the supreme achievement of memory, which is the masterly use it makes of innate harmonies when gathering to its fold the suspended and wandering tonalities of the past.

VLADIMIR NABAKOV, *Speak, Memory*

{F}or whatsoever is laid in, embroidered, checkered or engraved of many pieces of divers Colours, may properly be called an Emblem. But metaphorically (or in a figurative manner of Speech) Emblems signify mottos or devices, which point at a mystical or hidden sense of certain pictures. Emblems are speaking pictures, containing general documents, instructions, and morals.

FRANCIS PASTORIUS, *Emblematical Recreations*

Neither the sun nor death can be looked at with a steady eye. In truth, most normal persons do not meditate much on their own death, but, rather, they look on death as something concerning their neighbors, and others—not themselves.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD, *Maxims*

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Preliminary Remarks



There is a great difference between the knowledge which the producer of a thing possesses concerning it, and the knowledge which other persons possess concerning the same thing. Suppose a thing is produced in accordance with the knowledge of the producer, the producer was then guided by his knowledge in the act of producing the thing. Other people, however, who examine this work and acquire a knowledge of the whole of it, depend for that knowledge on the work itself.

MOSES MAIMONIDES, *Guide for the Perplexed*

The subject of this book can be introduced best with an illustration. It comes from a series of moral emblems printed along the margins of a text known as Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book (1578). The images are not directly connected to the text; they frame it and thus set a boundary for the reader's focus—both visually and spiritually. If a reader's eyes stray from the printed prayers, his or her attention quickly is redirected to profitable matter by way of a visual digression. Most of the images used in this series were so well known during the sixteenth century that they would have been considered commonplace or even trite. The Elizabethan reader therefore could take in a precept at a glance, almost without stopping to think about the image presented. And while any one of the twenty-two personified virtues decorating *The Booke of Christian Prayers* could serve to introduce my project, I want to call special attention to Memory (see Fig. P.R.1).

Memory, perhaps because of its specific allegorical content, more directly than the other figures reflects the ideational mechanisms associated with the production, circulation, and consummation of its meaning. This image in particular—with respect to its form and function—provides us with an exemplary metacritical reflection on the fundamentally mnemonic quality of emblems in the early modern period. It at once declares and encapsulates the end of all such emblems, which, as Francis Bacon claimed, was to reduce “conceits intellectual to images sensible, which strike the memory more.”¹

Although the moral implications of this figure may be so obvious as to make commentary unnecessary, it is worth pausing to reflect on the conditions giving rise to, and then to read through, this emblematic tableau.

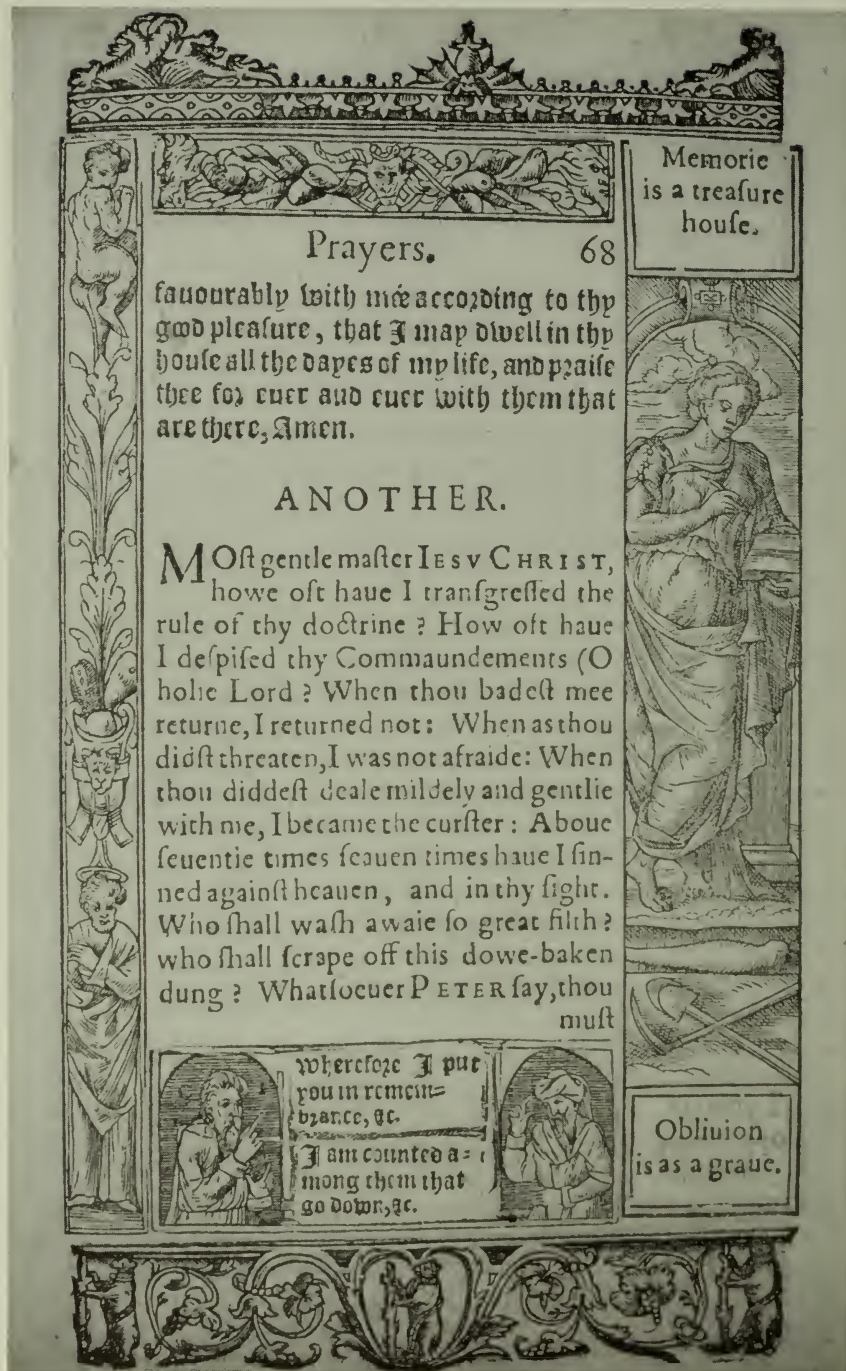


FIG. P.R.1. "Memorie is a treasure house." Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1608), sig. S4. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

Doing so will offer a way of construing such an involved mixture of words and images according to the emblematic *mentalité* current during Shakespeare's day. But first, by way of setting the stage for scrutinizing the matter depicted on the margin, I would indicate the main theoretical concerns of this study and clarify my approach to mnemonic emblems and melancholy designs.

Above all else this book seeks to reopen, and to ask in new ways, questions about this *mentalité* by historicizing the metaphorical component of Renaissance symbolic processes. I contend that Renaissance metaphors was essentially mnemonic and emblematic, and that it took as its grounding the relation of the body and soul within time. Consequently, owing to the ways allegorical operations were put to use and were theorized as having been used, Renaissance metaphors signals and enacts a continual revelation of mortality—namely, of the death of the body (figured as a kind of vehicle) and the eternity of the soul (as that which is to be transported). This theme, as it applies to emblematic mechanisms for representing the human condition, is exemplified in a much reprinted emblem taken from Paradin's *Heroical Devices* (1591). (See Fig. P.R.2.) The basic operations of mnemonic emblems in general, typical of metaphoric expressions of mortal temporality, are disclosed in the viewer's taking in, and taking to heart, what this emblem has to convey. Moreover, during this period the relation between the components of the device—the picture and the word—was likened to that between body and soul: The picture was quickened or animated by the word. Whether the emblem was used to convey timeless truths or was appropriated for personal mementos of something worth being recalled, its efficacy depended on a process of commemoration and recollection. For this reason, my analysis places the widespread body of emblem and mnemonic material of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at the core rather than at the periphery of the culture. As a result of my shifting the ground of applied emblematics, this book argues that emblematic designs are indexes to, and viable expressions of, commonplace Renaissance metaphoric processes and related methods of conveying, transporting, or translating thought images into graphic, discursive, and linguistic practices; and that mnemonics, broadly conceived, is a principal and recurring method of such metaphorical operations; and, finally, that the mapping of mortality is a focal purpose and animating impulse of Renaissance metaphors.²

Implicit in the way I have cast my argument is the assertion, taken from early Heidegger, that death provokes the question of being. And yet it is not so much an existential or even a ritualized understanding of death that is studied here as it is death as an ontotheological construction and prospect, as that which is conceptualized as having been projected as being always already futural.³ More specifically, it is the problem—and the ease—of repre-

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

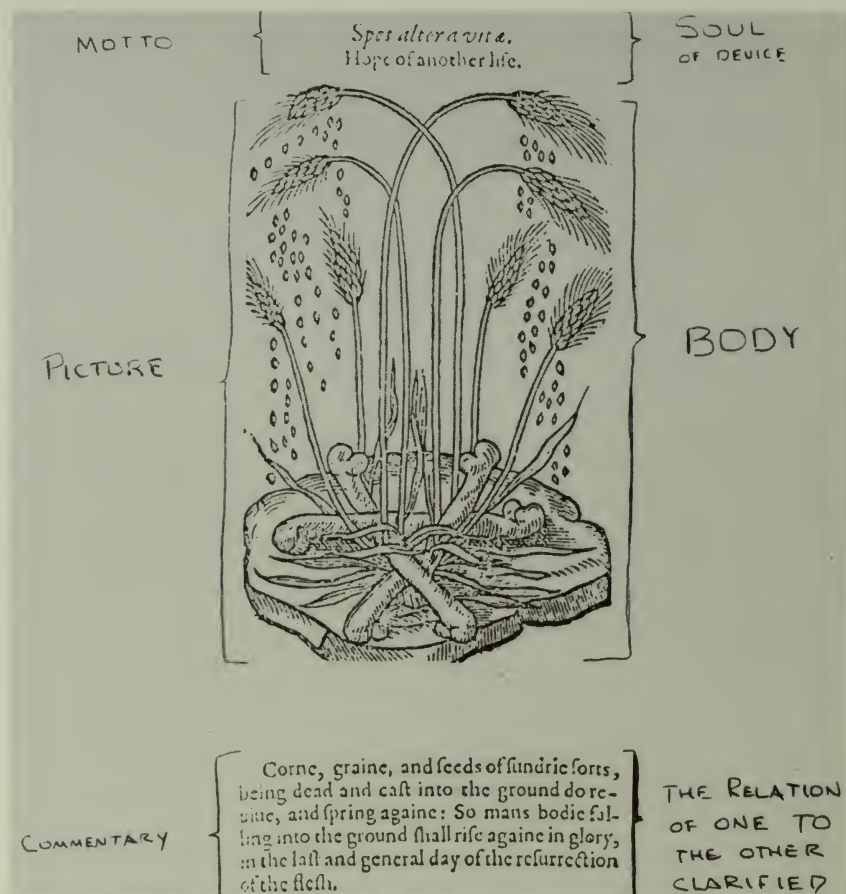


FIG. P.R.2. Chart showing an emblem's three parts. "Spes altera vitæ," Claude Paradin, *Heroical Devices* (London, 1591), p. 320.

senting death that provokes the question of being. Although the ideological effects of the allegorized figure of death are considered, for the most part this study is not concerned with the symbolic lineage of death and melancholy in the Renaissance. Rather, my attention is directed toward extant traces of the preacher's, poet's, painter's, engraver's, and essayist's active engagement with recalling and representing the elusive but always ready-at-hand possibility of one's own implied future absence. This aspect of recognition I discuss explicitly as an experiential act of re-cognizing, of re-mem-bering, one's end, as an activity of piecing together and coming to know again and anew matters that previously have been assimilated—if only liminally (or subliminally). Further, in keeping with the traditional line of metaphysical

inquiry launched by Aristotle (namely, the question of why there are, rather than are not, beings in the world), I explore the extent to which the early modern understanding of being is one of "being-toward-death," and the "question of the question of Being" emerges as the prior consideration, anterior to any analysis of mortal temporality.⁴

The connection between mnemonics and death (and between mnemonics and the allegorical figure of Death), seen in this light, comes into clear focus; for commonplace Renaissance metaphoric structures and processes readily submit themselves to be viewed as so many momentary revelations of death (and of Death). The place of death in our being is revealed, and the problem of death as a part of our being is resolved, in part through images, through words, and through the combination of both taken together; for the other part, death declares to us its abysmal presence in the space between the black and white of the engraved lines, between the printed words and the blank page, between the margins and the center, as our point of focus and line of vision move and shift from the one to the other. Therefore this study does not engage in hermeneutic readings which give precedence to one aspect of the artifact—whether visual or discursive, whether allegorical or material—over the other. As a result I am able to ask questions about, and to situate, the mapping of mortality as a fundamental aim of metaphoric processes, as they were conceptualized and put into practice in early modern England.

To turn now and theorize our attempt to read the figure of Memory along with her shrouded counterpart, Oblivion, we need to keep in mind that any such symbolically charged image initially is to be read in terms of the iconographic conventions familiar to the literate Elizabethans for whom this book of home devotions was designed. The feminine personification of Memory has a long and well-documented history in the West, one that is linked to but iconographically distinct from Mnemosyne, the mother of the nine Muses. But, as Heidegger has commented, "when it is the name of the Mother of the Muses, 'Memory' does not mean just any thought of anything that can be thought. Memory is the gathering and convergence of thought upon what everywhere demands to be thought about first of all."⁵ This brings into the open what is common regarding everyday thinking about memory, and also what is less obvious: namely, that the conventional ways available to us for figuring memory also conceal what may be most fundamental to understanding it (for it is this that withdraws, refuses arrival, when we are drawn toward thinking about it). To have been drawn toward thinking at all, and this is especially true where memory is concerned, depends on substitutions, on metaphoric correspondences, on the workings of poesy.⁶ Thinking about memory, then, is to think back to the basis of mortal thinking itself—and yet, in doing so, to have drawn already on "Memory" as a vivifying character in our cultural, poetic imagination.

Even so, Memory is recognized as such according to standard regulations for constructing and identifying allegorical figures. She is distinguished from the hundreds of other personifications of virtues and vices by her complementary attributes: a pen (or stylus) in her right hand and a book (or palimpsest) in the other.⁷ Her particular attributes point the way toward how we are to know what she stands for and then how we might go about imitating, and making our own, what she represents. Although Memory sometimes is shown with a black dog,⁸ in Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book the figure is meant to be read in another, very specific way—a reading clarified by Memory's position over and against her allegorical opposite, the grave-shrouded figure of Oblivion.

The entire panel depicts a visual dialogue of opposites, in which each figure—triumphant Memory and trampled-down Oblivion—conditions and supplements rather than cancels or negates the meaning of the other. We can discern here the emblematic significance of Memory in human endeavors: Even though Memory can be conceived as being an abstract and ideal virtue, individual memory is recognized as being all too easily extinguished by death. The melancholy end of all men and women is seen in Oblivion's image which, by virtue of metonymy, is represented by the gravedigger's instruments and a shrouded, faceless corpse, collectively signifying "death" (and, more particularly, "my death still to come"). Closely related to this implication is the melancholy acknowledgment that even though Memory is figured as an immortal recorder, what she writes may fade in time, may be wiped away or otherwise lost to mortal sight.

Thus engaged in a dialectical relation to Oblivion, the figure of Memory can be seen as epitomizing the content, aim, and method of organization of Renaissance commonplace books. Such notebooks, whether kept in one's own hand or already printed, were used to record and preserve sentences, anecdotes, and memorable passages from classical works, collected under topical headings and often grouped by opposites.⁹ In this way the individual had access to, and to some extent could create, a treasure house (or thesaurus) of past words, deeds, and ideas. The metaphoric comparison expressed in the descriptive tag "Memorie is a treasure house," placed above the allegorical personification,¹⁰ suggests to the reader an emblematic strategy for temporarily outdistancing death and keeping oblivion at bay. Composite expressions of the will to endure in the face of mortality, like this one represented through the dynamic relation of memory and images of death, form the basis of my inquiry into the mapping of mortality during the English Renaissance. As a result, this book raises from oblivescence an affinity among the arts of memory, emblematic images (and their linguistic counterpart, *sententiae*), and patterns of melancholy. Each in its own right has attracted the attention of scholars. Consequently, each has come to be associ-

ated with discrete literary traditions: treatises on natural and artificial memory; emblem books, illustrated “bibles of the poor,” dialogues on and collections of heroic devices, commonplace books, thesauri, and behavior manuals; essays, anatomies, and medical treatises. However, when seen in the light of one another, their boundaries begin to shift and merge. Perhaps what most sets my book apart from others that take up some of the same topics is that, rather than “define away” areas of conjunction, my aim has been to review (and, in some cases, to reconstruct) the overlapping of memory, emblems and *sententiae*, and melancholy.¹¹

Emblematic tokens, textual exercises, and material aids for reflecting on one’s end hardly are unique to the Renaissance or northern Europe; and yet, in the late sixteenth century, a variety of new forms came to prominence.¹² Closer scrutiny of these conventions of expression provides insight into the uses of allegory characteristic of, and peculiar to, the literary cultures of the early modern period. Therefore, this study explores how, within a text—whether a literary or a visual one—one’s point of focus is moved from general themes and universal truths toward personal applications of them, and then back again. What interests me here is not so much the individual’s application of an emblem’s or a maxim’s didactic message in his own life as the moment of his becoming conscious of some sort of connection (which paradoxically is disengaged and lost at the instant one becomes aware of it) and then later recalling the experience of the movement between self and other, between the profane and the sacred, and (of chief importance for my study) between the real and the allegorical. In each case, the later term (the other, the sacred, the allegorical) accedes to a kind of reality that takes precedence over (and is deemed more desirable than) what is generally acknowledged as real. Each chapter takes up this theme, incrementally increasing in complexity. For, as will become clear through this step-by-step approach, during the early modern period, stimulating just such an awareness (of the dynamic interplay of seemingly oppositional structures of thought) was the calculated end of a variety of emblematic designs and textual devices mapping our mortality—like those ranging from anamorphic paintings, with their encoded double perspectives, to the transtemporal shifting of perspective characteristic of epic poetry.¹³ In cases like these, the viewer is made to sustain, for as long as is achievable, contradictory points of view until he reaches some sort of accommodation or otherwise can square the discrepant, even jarring, perspectives.¹⁴ It is not so much the engagement in this activity that is of importance here as it is the act of remembering the experience of having been thus engaged. And so, in addition to touching on Cervantes, Bacon, and Burton, this book offers extended and resonant readings of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Montaigne’s *Essays*, and Thomas Browne’s *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*. These

texts are considered in the light of contemporaneous paintings and maps, as well as popular sermons and devotional practices, so as to situate and question what I assess as being emergent attitudes toward the limits and the liberating potential of the human memory to devise and be governed by allegorical constructions and imagery.

With this in mind, let us survey the plan of the book. Chapter 1 examines various applications of "topical" memory systems and their special ways of organizing pictorial space and deploying lively allegorical imagery. Consistent with the cultural practices I study, this chapter begins with a summary tour of five mnemonic itineraries concerned with the mapping of mortality. Each "place" visited is exemplary for its use of classical mnemonic principles, and each stands out as a notable point in an extended reflection on the Renaissance memory arts. The theoretical implications are pursued further through references to structural linguistics, psychoanalysis, and cinematography. The second section of Chapter 1 analyzes key terms and practices discussed in rhetorical and mnemotechnical handbooks, so as to clarify several distinctions useful for assessing the various types of mnemonic operations, especially as they inform the mental processes and textual strategies associated with the memory arts in particular and Renaissance metaphors in general. My effort to construe the trace of memory in Renaissance theory and practice fittingly is recapitulated with a close reading of an Elizabethan broadside titled "The Map of Mortalitie."

Chapter 2 pursues the theoretical issues introduced in the preceding chapter by analyzing John Milton's negotiation of them in *Paradise Lost*. I focus on the rhetorical portrait of Death as "the other" and take into account that the allegorical presentation of the character of Death has a long and venerated textual and graphic history. Through analyzing some early printed versions of death shown in connection with the printing press, this chapter helps to account both for Milton's choice of how to represent Death (as an allegorical character standing over and against all that is mortal, including artifice) and for the philosophy of composition implied in such a choice. This chapter situates Milton's rhetorically grounded poetic practice with respect to Jacques Derrida's notion of "différence/différance."¹⁵ For, like Milton's portrait of Death, the projection of Derridean *différance* is that which ultimately is untranslatable, undefinable, and unthinkable. And yet Milton's complicated portrait of Death does succeed in calling to mind a series of seemingly incompatible images which turn back on themselves and, through a paradoxical twist, turn the reader back on himself and his mortality. By confronting the reader simultaneously with the limits of mortality and of representation, Milton projects a way for the reader to recognize the transhistorical and cosmic sweep of God's gaze and divine

plan. In so doing Milton implicitly acknowledges his recognition of the limits of his own discourse.

Chapter 3 continues to explore the connections between and among memory, death, and writing in the early modern period by focusing on Montaigne's *Essais*. The main thematic headings under which this inquiry is carried out are also those things that Montaigne says he inherited respectively from his culture, from his ancestors, and from his father, namely, (1) his language, literature, and selected *sententiae*; (2) his chateau, including the tower that contained the library where he composed his essays—an endeavor resulting in the composition of his “character” in a way which, I argue, differs from conventional humanist interpretations of this process; and (3) his death-dealing kidney stones. As a result of what I demonstrate was a compositional practice derived from the arts of memory, we can see that for Montaigne *exempla* and *sententiae* were both a means and an end. They served him as seeds, or repositories, of ancient wisdom and enabled him to discover anew profitable information by revisiting sites of his previous reading and judgments. And so, despite his claim to forget authors, places, and words—and even his own writings and compositions—his essays became for him not just a way to register, collect, and situate his novel thoughts related to words from the past but also a means of recording, dwelling on, and assessing the symptoms of his advancing bodily decay: “For want of naturall memory I frame some of paper. And when some new symptome or accident commeth to my evill [kidney stones], I set it downe in writing” (III.13, p. 356).¹⁶ This way of conceptualizing Montaigne's composition—as a sign and the result of his construction of an artificial and intertextual memory in (and as) a book that incorporated, and also gave a textual presence to, his stones—provides a paradigm for reading other exemplary passages in the *Essais*. This way of analyzing the essayist's literary treatment of his body—as of the body of his text, and of the bodies perceived by the essayist to be moving within and through his body, which are likened to the disembodied voices of others lodged within the body of his text—enables me to put into place a matrix of analogous relations critical for discussing Montaigne's early modern exemplarity as both map and mapper of early modern mortality.

Chapter 4 looks more closely at the implosion of meaning (and memory) in representations of the body seen in, and as, death. Primarily this chapter is concerned with locating and interpreting notable variations on the *memento mori* theme, where the image of death is “de-centered”—whether facilitated by emblematic traditions or by typographic conventions. In the cases adduced, death allegorically stands between our life and the work of art and at the same time heralds the message which its very position on the page imitated: “inversion,” the message of man's ultimate “reversal,” of his move-

ment from being to nonbeing, from life to death and then to life everlasting or eternal perdition. This chapter attends to the possibilities of visual scansion in works that are composed to body forth an evanescent frame, a series of centers or crossings, anamorphic inscriptions, or floating cartouches.¹⁷ For example, maps, like sacred parables and utopian visions, perhaps as a response to the certain knowledge of our mortality, reflect a desire to gain knowledge of—and, in some measure, control over—what eludes our grasp, what is just out of reach, whether in space or time.¹⁸ This can be seen most readily in works using ingenious techniques of self-referential symbolization that ring out from the center toward the outer margins, so as to frame one's reading of the text and, by extension, of the world and one's place in it.

Similes of death and images used to communicate the relation between body and soul show up everywhere in the literature of the Renaissance, and yet what is remarkable for my study is their close correspondence, not only to melancholy and mnemonic emblems but also to self-conscious application of the principles associated with their representation. For some emblems, together with their mottoes, explicitly declared the emblem's commemorative function; injunctions to "scrutinize oneself" and to "remember death" pervaded religious and secular life. It is in this respect that the death's head may be thought of as a focal emblem of the seventeenth century.¹⁹ But my study works in the other direction as well, for, following Benjamin and building on Jean-Luc Nancy, I suggest that the death's head is an apt point of departure for figuring contemporary understandings of the interplay between the allegorical and real.²⁰ By using a threshold episode in *Don Quixote*, my critical treatment in Chapter 4 of that which conditions and precedes any conceptualization of "the real" and of that upon which "the allegorical" is founded anticipates my discussion in Chapter 5 of Browne's melancholy ruminations on perpetuity and the immemorial mortal desire to endure.

The number of dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Aequinox? Every hour addes unto that current arithmatique, which scarce stands one moment. . . . Since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying *memento's* and time that grows old it self, bids us hope no long duration: Diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.²¹

The attitude toward life expressed here—and toward an appropriate way of representing it discursively—implies a way of reading the world as a ruin. Traditionally, melancholy informs the baroque prose writer's enterprise, and it marks all mortal artifacts—even (and especially) those concerned with

mirth.²² In the face of the recognition of decay and transience—and the face is that of Death—melancholy is the baroque allegorist's principal subject of inquiry and his impetus for writing. The process of creating and using such emblems and hieroglyphics fed into and reflected the vogue for aphorisms and *sententiae*; further, it conditioned a new kind of introspection during the early modern era that was associated with melancholy.

Therefore, in Chapter 5, I draw on the Platonic notion of anamnesis developed in the opening chapters—that knowledge is remembrance—and examine the ways it was translated into seventeenth-century literature, especially as pertains to the mnemonic mapping of mortality. This chapter details the dynamic spiritual drama played out between body and soul as it was represented in the work of Thomas Browne in ways that went beyond normative, discursive practices. For example, the dialectically conceived relation of body and soul is encoded in the very structure of his essays. I argue further that Browne's essays *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus* are two parts of a grander mnemonically organized composition meant to be read as an enlarged *memento mori* emblem.²³ Each essay, like a panel of a devotional diptych, is to be viewed (and read) on its own as well as with respect to the other so as to bring to the entire work a coherent and enriched meaning that neither could produce alone. This mode of reading—like that elicited by the “body” (word) and “soul” (picture) of an emblem—encourages the reader to discover a moral message concealed in a compound design (see again Fig. P.R.2).

This same pattern of reading and of organizing human experience in terms of emblematic tableaux can be applied to other popular devices of the period. For example, the maps, margin illustrations, anamorphic paintings, and *portraits macabres* discussed in Chapter 4 all invite the reader to look from two, often contradictory, perspectives at once. As a result of my analysis in Chapter 5 of seventeenth-century allegories of ruin and the ruin of allegory (in tandem with my attention to the intersection of memory, emblems, and melancholy), this book provides contemporary readers with a key for recovering and understanding—in its early modern context—the epistemological assumptions of a mnemonically oriented principle of aesthetics.

ONE



Construing the Trace of Memory

Giotto to Broadside

The word “trace” in the chapter title is intended in several senses. First, as an artistic activity, it means to cover the original and, guided by the bolder marks that are still visible, to copy anew the contours of the image or object one desires to reproduce. The result is a likeness of the original that carries with it the telltale signs of its being a reproduction, but at the same time declaring itself to be a work of art in its own right. In this sense the result is a simulacrum, a second-order image, which offers a way for me to study the relation between the baroque artificer and the product of his ingenuity.¹ The complexities of this relationship form the basis of my inquiry, and the following chapters, step by step, seek to sort out and analyze the ontotheological implications of this peculiar aspect of mimesis, which I will situate as being rooted in an aesthetic of anamnesis (where knowledge is predicated on remembrance).

The second way in which I intend the word “trace” is in its dynamic and nuclear sense. A trace is what is left behind an element (usually a radioactive one) as it decays—as it passes, little by little, into another, and into a new state. This process of decay identifies the element’s current presence and also delivers the lineage of its former states, back to its point of origin—at least to one who sees the identifying vestiges and recognizes its characteristic (though disintegrating) signature.

A trace also is the term used for an old bridle path that, over time, has become more heavily traveled and thus more prominent to everyday sight. As it becomes more accessible and is used by more people, the scenery becomes so familiar that passers-by cease to remark on its peculiar terrain and landmarks. As the path deepens (owing to the heavy travel and to

natural erosion), the former byways and side paths that used to be at the same level become more difficult to see, and, if noticed at all, they are difficult to access in the vehicle that one uses to move along the thoroughfare. The same can be said of the memory arts which left a deep impression on the arts and letters of the Renaissance. As I will discuss in this chapter, they survive and resurface in some expected, although decidedly curious, cultural practices. My aim, then, is to return to prominence some of these practices and to analyze their relation to man's end so as to set the stage for understanding the theoretical underpinnings common to metaphoric and mnemonic processes—specifically emblems, memory, and melancholy—during the early modern period. These practices, more times than not today, are discussed in terms of “center vs. margin,” where one term is given precedence over the other. But my research indicates that what we consider central or ancillary when confronting an emblem, map, or essay was not necessarily conceived in such a strict dialectical relation during the Renaissance, on the one hand the main matter, and on the other the peripheral or liminal.

Trace is an especially apt term to use when scrutinizing emblematic conceits and mnemonic devices, because one needs to be able to stay on track in order to recover bits of information. One has to be able to read and retrieve, to encode and decode, the symbols in a designated sequence. This much having been said, let us move on to explore a variety of representative and distinct itineraries for reading the Renaissance map of mortality by following attentively the trace of memory. At the same time, let us pursue the trace of these representative cultural remains which were designed specifically to assist in recovering and, by virtue of this anamnestic activity, to experience fundamentally—albeit through a mediated, metaphoric process—what was at the root of (and, indeed, the end of) man's being in the world.

MNEMONIC EMBLEMS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF PICTORIAL SPACE

As a way of introducing the main components of my inquiry and also as a performative exercise (enacting even as it invokes the themes under investigation), let us embark on a summary tour of five exemplary mnemonic itineraries concerned with the mapping of mortality. As we visit each site, let us assign an “encoded mnemonic” device to stand for it, and then imagine these devices projected against a background, or organizational mnemonic—whether using your fingers, a familiar street with five recognizable landmarks, or an imaginary room with a conspicuous entrance to make up five “repositories” for images.² Each place is exemplary for its use of



FIG. 1.1. Scrovegni Chapel in the Arena at Padua (c.1305).

classical mnemonic principles, and each stands out as a notable point in an extended reflection on the Renaissance memory arts. We will move then from external to internal designs and, in so doing, progress from larger structures to successively smaller ones: from a sumptuous chapel to a modest private chamber depicting emblems, to a private chamber depicted in an emblem, to a poetically extravagant yet mnemonically decorous sermon, to a six-tiered pattern of private prayer and meditation.

To begin, our first image is of a chapel (Fig. 1.1). In the first decade of the fourteenth century, Giotto completed a series of frescoes for this chapel built on the grounds of the old Roman arena. It was erected by Enrico Scrovegni, one of the richest men in Padua, reputedly to atone for the sins of his deceased father and to redeem his soul from Purgatory.³ Although the iconographic program can be read in terms of the donor's expiatory purpose, Giotto was not bound by this for the whole series.⁴ His choice of the "images," and the "places" he made for them, is entrenched in the memory arts; so much so that James Burke described these frescoes as "a mnemonic path to salvation"⁵ (Fig. 1.2). This much is evident from close "reading" of specific frescoes, as well as noting how they relate to others.⁶ But the chapel can be considered a vast organizational mnemonic as well, owing to the general layout of the scenes. And so, while recognizing the importance of, but leaving aside, questions about the exact meaning of all the pictures, I want to focus on what Julia Kristeva has described as Giotto's "organization



FIG. 1.2. Nave of Scrovegni Chapel (c.1305).



FIG. 1.3. Charity. Scrovegni Chapel, painted by Giotto (c.1305).

of pictorial space," because this concern is central to mnemonic decorum in the Renaissance.⁷

At the lowest part of the south and north walls, at about eye level, Giotto included a series of allegorical Virtues and Vices. Of all the friezes, as Frances Yates pointed out long ago, these are the ones most obviously intended to be read mnemonically.⁸ They are painted as fourteen trompe l'oeil statues situated in niches—like those mentioned explicitly in Renaissance memory tracts and discussed in Quintilian's manual on oratory.⁹ Also, these figures are arranged so that each Virtue, like Charity (Fig. 1.3), faces a corresponding Vice across the room, in this case Envy.¹⁰ As was mentioned in the Preliminary Remarks, this is a mnemonic technique grounded both in the Aristotelian commonplace tradition (of setting up headings according to antitheses) and in the Ciceronian rhetorical tradition (of winning someone over by presenting vivid examples).¹¹ According to William Fulwood, a

Renaissance translator of the memory arts, the systematic use of such allegorical personifications is one of the main “precepts of remembraunce”;¹² he advises us to “thinke upon contraries: for he that will be myndfull of Hector, shall remember also Achilles.” Thus, in a physical (or visual) sense and in a spiritual (or invisible) sense, the visitor to the Arena Chapel stands between Virtue and Vice, just as in daily life he is flanked by and must choose between the two in its various forms.

Rising above these monochromatic figures are vibrantly colored episodes from the Bible and Marian lore. The disposition and even the number of these trompe l’oeil framed images is consonant with typical Renaissance memory systems, which located convenient backgrounds along the walls of a room. For example, Philip Sidney recalled in his *Apology for Poetry*: “even they that have taught the art of memory have showed nothing so apt for it as a certain room divided into many places well and thoroughly known.”¹³ And Richard Mulcaster, the preeminent educator of Elizabethan England, professed: “If the nyne *Muses* and *Apollo* their president were painted upon the wall, [the student] might talke to them without either laughing or lowering, they would serve him for places of memorie, or for hieroglyphical partitions.”¹⁴ Such mnemonic “surfaces,” whether imaginary or material, followed designated number patterns, whether a decade (like the nine Muses plus Apollo, making up ten) or more basic units of five or six.¹⁵ The rationale for doing so, as Hugh Plat noted in his handbook of practical commonplace information, is that

by this meanes your first your fift, your tenth, your fifteenth, and your twentieth subiect, & Both forward and backward is easily brought to minde. The rest of the subiects in euerie Decade may be such as are meere differing the one from the other vnlesse you shall like to haue some few of them resembling the profession of him that beginneth the Decade.¹⁶

And, following closely his source text, *Ad Herennium*, Fulwood echoed this axiom: “these names must be kept alwaies in mynd and the places from five to five that the quinarie or fyfte places may alwaies be had in Memorie.”

This much having been established, let us return now to the Arena Chapel’s use of “pictorial space”: The south wall is divided clearly into five sections by six windows; each section accommodates two frescoes, so that the whole wall includes the mnemonically significant number of ten events of Christ’s life (Fig. 1.4, respectively numbered 15–19 and 27–31).¹⁷ On the north wall, carefully preserving the same dimensions as the frescoes on the south wall, are two sets of six images (20–25 and 32–37), making a total of twelve more episodes—or “places”—in the mnemonic Christ-cycle. Although linked narratively, the two sets of six are memorable in their own



1. Joachim expelled from the Temple. - 2. Joachim with the Shepherds. - 3. The Annunciation to St. Anne. - 4. The Sacrifice of Joachim. - 5. The Dream of Joachim. - 6. The Meeting at the Golden Gate. - 7. The Birth of Mary. - 8. The Presentation of Mary in the Temple. - 9. The Consignment of the Rods. - 10. The Prayer for the Flowering of the Rods. - 11. The Marriage of Mary. - 12. The Wedding Procession. - 13. The Annunciation. - 14. The Visitation. - 15. The Nativity. - 16. The Adoration of the Magi. - 17. The Presentation in the Temple. - 18. The Flight into Egypt. - 19. The Massacre of the Innocents. - 20. Christ with the Doctors in the Temple. - 21. The Baptism. - 22. The Marriage at Cana. - 23. The Raising of Lazarus. - 24. The Entry into Jerusalem. - 25. The Cleansing of the Temple. - 26. The Pact of Judas. - 27. The Last Supper. - 28. The Washing of Feet. - 29. The Betrayal. - 30. Christ before Caiaphas. - 31. The Flagellation. - 32. The Way to Calvary. - 33. The Crucifixion. - 34. The Pietà. - 35. Noli me Tangere. - 36. The Ascension. - 37. Pentecost. - 38. God the Father consigns the Message for the Virgin to the Archangel Gabriel. - *Over the Door of Entrance: The Last Judgment.*

THE VICIES: a) Stupidity. - b) Inconstancy. - c) Anger. - d) Injustice. - e) Infidelity. - f) Envy. - g) Despair. - **THE VIRTUES:** h) Hope. - i) Charity. - l) Faith. - m) Justice. - n) Temperance. - o) Fortitude. - p) Prudence.

CHANCEL: Frescoes of the School of Giotto: *Left Wall, beginning from the left:* The Virgin prays to be reunited to her Son; St. John takes leave of the Virgin; *The Death of Mary. - Right Wall, beginning from the left:* The Virgin and Child; The Coronation of the Virgin; The Assumption; The Burial of the Virgin.

Sculpture: Monument of Enrico Scrovegni founder of the church, died 1336 (14th century). - Giovanni Pisano: The Virgin and Child with two Saints.

SACRISTY: Giotto: Crucifix on panel. - Statue of Enrico Scrovegni (14th century). - Pietro Paolo Santacroce (1595): The Annunciation (Banner painted on silk).

FIG. 1.4. Schematic plan of Scrovegni Chapel interior.

right by virtue of being situated as distinct from the two sets of five on the opposing wall. These two sets of memory tableaux, consisting of ten and then of twelve "places" respectively, are linked thematically and mnemonically by the image of the Annunciation at the top of the arch (13), which serves to activate another sequence of two sets of six memory images, involving the life of Mary and the signs and wonders leading up to the coming of Christ (1–12). Moreover, this overarching image of the Annunciation helps to bridge and to clarify the direction of movement that our eye—and by extension, our spirit—undertakes when working through this truly engulfing program. The direction indicated is a downward-spiraling cycle, through key events in sacred history; thus it is a trajectory that mirrors and enacts the movement of the Word being made flesh, even as it reflects the conditions of our own mortality, as we move through the sequence beginning at the top of the south wall and continue on around the top of the north wall—encountering events that precede Christ's birth—and then down, around again and down, around and down, until at last, buoyed up by the bottommost images of the Ascension and Pentecost (36 and 37)—mysterious events that come after Christ's death—our eyes, minds, and hearts are impelled and exhorted upward to God the Father consigning the Message for the Virgin to Gabriel (38).

Also on the altar wall are two pictures (26 and 14), each of which is linked to the main narrative sequences (respectively, to the Christ-cycle and Marian lore). As such, they are each like hinges or visual conduits between the sets of mnemonic registers, and thus they help direct our gaze from one tableau to the next. Both images on this arch wall are linked thematically, in that they involve a mortal compact: first, "The Visitation" (14), in which God the Father makes clear his Plan for Man and we might even say his conception, in a double sense, of God-as-Man; and, second, the "Pact of Judas" (26) concerning the death of God-as-Man. So, although other pictorial matter adorns the chapel, the number of scenes is thirty-eight, or thirty-five if we do not include those on the altar wall proper (13, 14, and 26) which, when taken together, form something of a separate, triune mnemonic tableau in their own right.¹⁸

Though art historians concur that this number, thirty-five, neither corresponds to any dogmatic conception nor is derived from the iconographic tradition, anyone familiar with Renaissance mnemonic principles will recognize at a glance that these discrete sets of vividly represented episodes invoke the decorum of "places" used in a memory theater, both in theme and in number. For example, Fulwood counsels, "you may passe to fyve and thirtie . . . Images" (sig. F8v); and John Willis, with six sets of six in mind, reported in his popular *Art of Memory* that "[t]he number of things that may be committed once vnto a mans memory by this Art, are six and thirty,



FIG. 1.5. Entrance wall of Lady Drury's Oratory (sixteenth century).



FIG. 1.6. Back walls of Lady Drury's Oratory (sixteenth century).

which are abundantly sufficient for the memory to be charged withall at once" (sig. C11).

Less sumptuous than the Arena Chapel, although equally as complex in their involved programs, are later Renaissance halls, libraries, and prayer closets.¹⁹ Let this image of Lady Drury's chamber (Fig. 1.5) serve as our second mnemonic place on our itinerary; and, to keep it distinct from the Arena Chapel, imagine it placed on your second finger, or on the left wall of your mnemonic room. Norman K. Farmer correctly assessed its form and function when he said it was "like a memory theater employed for the recall and contemplation of particular truths."²⁰ After all, this room consisted of fifteen vertical rows of emblems, and the images are arranged in six discrete sections (Fig. 1.6).²¹ Because of the way they are situated on the walls and follow the contours of the room, and owing to the Latin *sententiae* which are like headings for the vertical rows of images, we can discern here a systematic arrangement that makes them well suited to mnemonic principles.²² Further, as Farmer noted further, "a very imaginative person conceived of this room quite literally as a book" (p. 105). Rooms designed to function as books, and books modeled on rooms of memory, both were common during the period.

In fact, the textual and material interplay of mnemonics and architecture is taken a step further in an emblem by Johann Saubert (Fig. 1.7). This emblem is the third "place" on our own mnemonic tour. Here we see a visual record of how such plaques, like those in Lady Drury's Oratory, were to be used. This combined mnemonic and visual function is addressed explicitly in many memory handbooks. For example, Willis put it this way:

the letter contained in the Scriptile Idea, be all of such bigness, as that they may plainly be read by him that standeth on this side of the *Repositorie*; like vnto the writings which we see in Churches. . . . There are 4 kinds of Scriptile Ideas: A single word, a Quotation, a Phrase, and a Sentence. . . . A Quotation must be written after the common manner thus, 2 Chron.9.6. Math.5.8.²³

Incidentally, these two examples are exemplary in another way, for they refer to the power of direct visual confrontations with God's truths. The first, 2 Chron. 9:6, refers to not believing until "I came, and mine eyes had seen it," and the second, Matt. 5:8, promises that the pure of heart "shall see God." Such encoded mnemonics, in the form of abbreviated biblical quotations, were considered decorous for use in one's artificial memory theater, just as handbooks of emblems and commonplaces were consulted for matter worthy of adorning one's Great Hall or private chambers, one's letters or table talk.

The motto (Fig. 1.7, *top left*) describes the main point of the emblematic

EXTERNA INCITET
ACTIO MENTEM

II. Frü morgens soll dein Leiblich merck
Dich weisen zu des Heiles Gerecht.



Cum surgis¹ (Iob. 5.) purgas² Ephes. 4. Es. 1. et Vigile³ (Ephes. 4.) et peccata⁴ Cor.
Ornas, devoto singula fac animo.

Das ist:

W Ann du frü¹ auß dem Betth erhebest deine Glieder/
Vnd den² gereynigten Leib³ bekleidest hin vnd wider/
Nimmst⁴ Wasser für die Hand/vnd⁵ richstest deine Haar/
So übe dich zugleich wider die Seelen-gfähr.

I. Gedenket an die fröliche Auferstehung der Auferwehnten/vnd an die schreckliche auferstehung der Verdampften/Iob. 5 v. 28. Es kommt die Stund / in welcher alle die in den Gräbern sind/ werden hören die Stimme des Menschen-Sohns/vnd werden herfür gehen die quies gethan haben zur auferstehung des Lebens/die aber böses gethan haben zur auferstehung des Gerichts. 1 Cor. 15 v. 43. Es wird geläch verwerflich/vnd wird auferstehen vnerwerflich / ic.

II. Ephes. 4 v. 22. So leget nun von euch ab nach dem vorigen wandel den alten Menschen/ der durch list in Irthum sich verderbet/ic. leget die Lügen ab/ic. Matth. 18 v. 9. So dich dein Aug ärgert/reiß es auß vnd weiffes von dir. Rom. 13 v. 12. Lasset vns ablegen die werck der Finsternis/ic. Colos. 3 v. 3. Nun aber leget ab von euch den Zorn/Grün/Lästerung / schandwort auß eurem Munde/ic. 1 Pet. 2 v. 1. Leget ab alle bößheit/betrug/heuchelen. Heb. 12 v. 1. Lasset vns ablegen die Sünden/ so vns nimmer antlebet. Jac. 1 v. 21. Leget ab alle vnfaubereit vnd alle bößheit/ic.

III. Ephes. 4 v. 22. Ziehet an den Neuen Menschen/ic. Col. 3 v. 12. Ziehet an/als die auß-erwehnten Götze/ic. hergütliches Erbarmen/Freundlichkeit/Demuth/Sanftmuth/Gedult/ic. Ephes. 6 v. 10. Ziehet an den Harnisch Gottes/ic. Galat. 3 v. 27. Wieviel erwer getauft sind/ die haben Christum angezogen. Rom. 13 v. 14. Ziehet an den Heiligen Jesum Christ/ic.

IV. Esa. 1 v. 16. Waschet vnd reiniget euch / thut ewer böses Wesen von meinen Augen/spricht der Herr. 1 Cor. 7 v. 1. Lasset vns von aller befleckung des Fleisches vns reinigen. Jac. 4 v. 8. Reiniget die Hände/ ihr Sünder/vnd machet ewer Herz keusch/ ihr Wanckelmüthigen. 1 Joh. 3 v. 3. Ein jealicher/ der solch hoffnung hat zu Christo / der reiniget sich / gleich wie er auch rein ist. Apoc. 1 v. 6. Christus hat vns gewaschen/ ihr seit geheiligt/ ihr seit gerecht worden/ic.

V. Esa. 40 v. 3. Luc. 3 v. 4. Marc. 1 v. 8. Bereitet den Weg des Herrn in den guten Wege. Eph. 9 v. 22. Richtet alle dene sach nach Gottes Wort. 1 Cor. 14 v. 40. Lasset alles ordentlich zu gehen ic.

FIG. 1.7. Emblem II. Johann Saubert, *Emblematum Sacrorum* (1625). Photo courtesy of The Newberry Library.

broadside sheet and also sums up the operations of such mnemonic cultural practices: *EXTERNA INCITET ACTIO MENTEM*. Among the ways this dense *sententia* could be translated are: "Outer action stimulates the mind" or "The mind is incited by external activity" or "Things done in the world stimulate lively thought." But whichever rendering we favor, the sense of the motto is that it is salutary and spiritually engaging to use properly external aids to contemplation, like this emblem. The motto is balanced by a parallel expression of the end of the emblem in the vernacular (*top right*), which reiterates this theme but stresses that early morning is the best time for strengthening one's spirit through corporal activities.

Five plaques are situated around the room, and each corresponds to different moments in one's morning routine. In contemporary parlance, this is like a "time-lapse" shot, taken at five different times but exposed on the same sheet. Many things are collapsed in this emblem, just as much matter is compacted in the abbreviated biblical quotations.

The placement of the plaques, like the sequence for reading them, is regulated through explicit directions in passages set off from the main emblem (beginning "Das ist" ["that is to say"]). The commentary gives moral prefaces to each of the biblical passages, corresponding to the plaques numbered 1 through 5—thus conforming to the basic mnemonic unit for conveniently storing items in mind. The plaques instruct us to rise early, dress, wash, clean ourselves, and comb our hair. But these directives go beyond the mere thematic commonplace heading "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," for the entire page is an elaborate cross-reference sheet of tangentially related scriptural truths of which we are admonished to be mindful. In this sense, the plaques sublimate the physical to the spiritual so as to ward off dangers to the soul by virtue of one's body being thus preoccupied. These plaques are designed, literally and metaphorically, to indoctrinate, to put doctrine into the person using this emblem and by his making it part of his daily regime.

The first plaque, seen upon first rising, is from John 5; it calls to mind Jesus' command to the diseased man to rise from his bed, bathe in the hallowed waters, and be made whole. The second, from Ephesians 4, seen as one removes his sleepwear, recalls the Pauline admonition regarding our growing in Christ "from whom the whole body fitly joined together." The same chapter applies to the third stage in one's morning rituals, getting dressed: "and that ye put on the new man." The fourth plaque, seen when washing, comes from Isa. 1:16: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes." And the fifth plaque, seen while grooming oneself, returns us to the new man of Ephesians.

Taken together, the mottoes, the emblem depicting five plaques, and the glossed explanations provide a blueprint of how to use mnemonic material as points of contemplation during the early modern period. Not only did

mnemonic imagery animate texts and give shape to many cultural artifacts of the seventeenth century, but the principles of the memory arts generated textual and homiletic practices as well. For example, the *artes memoriae* at times structured popular sermons, sometimes explicitly and sometimes more subtly. Although this has been studied with respect to Donne and Andrewes,²⁴ in the interest of clarifying what once passed as a commonplace use of the memory arts in devotional oratory, I want now to highlight and comment on the fundamental principles—principles that will show up in the succeeding chapters.

In 1610 Daniel Featley preached a sermon titled “Foure Rowes of Precious Stones” at St. Mary’s Church in Oxford.²⁵ Since he took as the guiding metaphor the image of Aaron’s breastplate (with four rows of three stones each), let us also take it as our fourth mnemonic “place” on our itinerary. Featley’s exegetical point of departure is Exod. 28:15–21:

15. And thou shalt make the breast-plate of judgement with cunning worke.
16. Foure square shall it be, being doubled.
17. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even foure rowes of stones: the order shall be this, a Rubie, a Topaze, and an Emerald, in the first rowe.
18. And in the second row thou shalt set a Carbuncle, a Saphir, and a Diamond.
19. And in the third row a Turkeise, and an Agate, and an Amethyst.
20. And in the fourth row a Beril, and an Onyx, and a Jasper: and they shall be set in gold in their inclosings or *imbosements*, Hebrew, *fillings*.
21. And the stones shall bee with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signea, everywhich his name shall they be, according to the twelve Tribes.

As might be expected, this sermon dwells on the arrangement of the twelve precious stones ceremonially worn by the priests among the ancient Hebrew people. Each stone served Featley as a rich “place of invention” and provided him with a seemingly endless chain of intertextual readings of the Old and New Testaments.²⁶ He acknowledges as much, and refers directly to the art of memory:

and because the rowes and stones in them may serve for *places* and *Images* in artificial memory, to imprint more firmly in our mind some remarkable story of the Patriarchs, whose names were engraven in them, I will observe some congruities betwixt them. (P. 501)

He observes these congruities for five folio pages and then comments explicitly on his mnemonically oriented method of exposition (which no

doubt assisted him in the original composition, in his recollection during delivery, and in his writing it out completely for publication):

Artificial memory, as *Cornificius* saith, consisteth of images and places. We need not goe farre for them, we have them both in my Text, *places*, Ver[se]. 17. "Thou shalt set it full of places for stones"; & *images* most resplendent in the Verses following: and very happy were I, if as here I have the names, so I had naturall effects attributed to some of these jewels: . . . so to furnish mee with materialls, and assist mee in laying them, that upon the *true foundation Christ Jesus*, I may build not *hay and stubble*, but *gold, silver, and precious stones*, such as shine in my Text; which I divide according to the foure rowes into foure parts. (P. 506)²⁷

Then, taking each stone as a "place" and the corresponding images, he reconstructs his discourse—which happens to be on the arrangement of the precious stones with respect to their correspondences to aspects of God's divine scheme. Although perhaps more precious and self-conscious in its application of the principles of the memory arts than other schemes, Featley's homiletic practice is consistent with the decorum and intended uses of the memory arts in the seventeenth century.²⁸

His mnemonically oriented practice returns time and again to what Featley calls "emblems." The mnemonic quality of emblems and the emblematic quality of mnemonic images were not lost on Featley. For example, when launching into his exegetical commentary on the first row of Aaron's breastplate, he asserts:

[t]he Ruby hath a perfect colour of flesh, whence it is called in Latin *Carneolis*; but with a lustre and resplendancy farre above the nature of flesh. What fitter emblem of the rayes of divine majesty shining in the flesh of our Saviour? (Pp. 505–6, sigs. Xx1v–Xx2)

We must agree it is a fit emblem indeed, and yet this reference to a lapidary emblem which shades into one of Christianity's chief paradoxes (the Incarnation), when seen with respect to the mental image evoked by the twelve stones arranged in four rows, strains his rhetorical device even unto its metaphorical breaking point. However, because of Featley's recognition of the commemorative value of both the subject of his discourse and his way of conveying it, he succeeds in translating his complex network of images into memorable words, which ultimately find their way into the Theater of his audience's mind.

Featley's discursive use of mnemonic emblems parallels Giordano Bruno's earlier descriptions and mystical Christian-Neoplatonic interpretations of emblems in *De gli eroici furori* (1585).²⁹ Despite their differences in

mystical and poetic orientation, both Bruno and Featley were aware that their representations of the divine majesty, concealed within worldly things, were indebted to the mnemonic quality of emblematic devices. Featley goes so far as to acknowledge that his oratorical training and technique, as well as his sermon's theme and structure, are grounded firmly in the arts of memory. What is more, he maintains (perhaps too ingeniously) that he is simply following the lead of David, the psalmist.

That the second Speaker, that sweet singer of Israel, whose ditty was, *Awake, & sing ye that sleep in the dust*, made (according to my Text) *a row*, or *Canticum graduum*, *a Psalme of ascents or degrees*, I cannot but even in a duty of thankfulness acknowledge, for the help of memory I received from it: had not he made a *row*, that is, digested and disposed his matter in excellent order, I should never have bin able to present to you the jewels set in this row, which are all (as you see) most orient. (P. 512)

The pun on "row" (as a way to organize a song, and also with regard to the disposition of the stones in Aaron's breastplate), like that on "orient" (suggesting precious commodities from the East but also implying "orientation," meaning to give stable coordinates for finding our way), is nuanced further by an understanding of the chief assumption of an artificial memory system: namely, that the orderly arrangement of symbols standing for what one wanted to recall provided a quick and easy way to organize, preserve, and, if need be, transform and transmit that information at some time in the future. Consistent with the techniques for effectively using an artificial memory system, he concludes the sermon by rehearsing (so as to fix once and for all) the background image, with its twelve lapidary places and, along with them, the encoded mnemonics which recall various biblical narratives and their corresponding moral injunctions—as well as providing a superadded mnemonic itinerary of rules for spiritual guidance. For the published version of the text, Featley provided the explanatory heading: "The spirituall and morall interpretation of the Rehearsers text, with a conclusion of the whole."

Thus have I now at length presented to your spiritual view the brest-plate of Aaron, decked richly with *fourre rowes of precious stones, set in bosses of gold*. To the fowre rowes I have compared the fourre methodicall Sermons which yee have heard; the *Jewels* in the rowes both to the parts of the Speakers, and to their precious *doctrine*, the embossement of *gold* to their *texts*. (P. 532)

Featley then involves himself, literally and symbolically, in the metaphors of his own discourse and in that of his sacred lapidary allegory:

yet not quite to change the allegory, I finde among the Lapidaries a stone which seemes to me a fit embleme of a Rehearser; it is no precious stone, though it be reckoned with them by *Pliny* and others, because at some times it representeth the colours of the rainbow . . . the name of the stone is Iris: whereunto I may make bold to compare myselfe, because in some sort I have represented unto you the beautifull colours of these twelve precious stones, as the Iris doth the colours of the Rainbow . . . and therefore I reflect all the lustre, splendour, and glorie of them, first, upon Almighty God, next upon the Jewels (the Preachers) themselves. (P. 532)

The principal tropological conceit of his allegory, Aaron's breastplate, undergoes several further turns and at last gives way to a reflection on the dynamics of the sermon itself, which is figured as an aural simulacrum. Ostensibly an apology for his mortal limitations and offered as a gesture of humility, this section nonetheless bristles with the same sort of mnemonic wit that characterizes the entire discourse.

Who ever expected of an Eccho to repeat the whole voyce, or entire speech? Sufficent it is that it resound some of the last words, and them imperfectly: it implyeth a contradicition, that a faire and goodly picture should be drawne at length in a short table: "The shadow alwayes comes short of the body, the image of the face, imitation of nature." (Pp. 532–33)³⁰

His quotation from Quintilian is wholly compatible with his approach to scriptural exegesis—but with a significant metaphorical point of difference: Mankind has been visited by and given the Word, and we render it, best as we can, in images. Seen in the other direction, the rehearser of the sermon begins with an organizational mnemonic image and then supplies words (in Featley's case, about 20,000 words).

As if to justify his lavish metaphorical transformations of the theme he has already treated so copiously, Featley turns next to various typological images others have ascribed to Aaron's breastplate. For example, Saint Paul "in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* proveth manifestly *Aaron* to be a type of Christ, his actions of Christ's passion."³¹ Also, Saint Jerome, according to Featley, took the four rows for the four cardinal virtues (p. 533). Following a staggeringly exhaustive catalogue of the "myserie hid in the numbers" regarding the four rows (including the beasts in Revelation, the Evangelists, the orders in the Church hierarchy), he concludes his "mystical interpretation."

Leaving behind the virtues of the numbers 12 and 4, he then sums up "the morall" of the four-part sermon with six points (six being a mnemonically significant "cluster number," as has already been noted and which will be explored more fully in the sections to follow). The first point concerns

Aaron's vestments and ornaments, which are "set forth unto us the dignity of the Priests office." Second, the breast is a privileged part of the body worthy of glorious ornaments because "God best esteemth the heart, and not the head"; third, referring again to the twelve tribes, "if you desire that Christ should beare you on his heart before his Father, beare you the names of his Tribes (his chosen) on your hearts before him." Fourth, "the stones, as they are of sundry kinds, and of different value, so they are set in diverse rowes, 1. 2. 3. 4. which illustrate unto us the diverse measures of grace given to beleevvers in this lif, and their different degrees of glory in the life to come." Fifth, the shining stones are "as twelve precious bookes, wherein you may read many excellent lessons printed with indelible characters." Then he turns his image into a text of which his audience becomes newly appointed readers, and annotators of that same text they themselves live in hope of being:

You see cleerly here the names of each of the Tribes in severall engraven; let your marginall note be, God hath from all eternity decreed a certaine number of Elect to bee saved, and hee hath written their names in severall in the booke of life.

Finally, the sixth moral point, based on the observation that the names of the tribes are "engraven in solid and precious stones with the point of a Diamond, never to be razed out," continues the metaphoric theme of our visualizing the key images of the sermon, no longer as a breastplate but as a book in which are written the Christological implications of each point: "let your interlinear glosse be, None of those whose names are *written in the booke of life can be stricken out*. For there is no blotting, interlining, nor *variae lectione* in that booke" (pp. 534–35). Then, as a summary to his summary, hoping to assure that the main points of his elaborate analogy remain in mind, he adds yet another organizational mnemonic scheme on top of the layers of related schemes already in place:

by the foure rowes you understand well the four well ordered & methodicall Sermons by me rehearsed: by the jewels, with the eminent parts of the Preachers, or their precious doctrines; by the embossments of gold, which the precious gems of divine doctrine were set, their texts: nothing remaineth but that the breast-plate being made, you put it on; and as *Aaron*, did, *beare it on your hearts*. (P. 536)

Explicit in this last line, and implicit throughout the sermon, is the self-referential pun to the breastplate as bearing something in mind, meaning to commit something to memory (as the etymology of "record" suggests).³²

We can only wonder how many who heard (or later read) this sermon applied Featley's design to visualize and find a mental repository for things most near their hearts. The principles of organization and the metaphoric processes that lead to such spiritual benefits, as described and used by homiletic orators like Featley, become evident in the light of mnemonic analysis.

The interior designs of a mnemonic chapel or an emblematically appointed prayer closet, the typological arrangement of images in illustrated biblical cycles or the architectural organization of devotional manuals or poems, each in its own way sought to activate and guide introspection. But what about when one was alone, without external visual or auditory stimulation, without a rosary or a Jesuit emblem book; when one was not in a chapel like that painted by Giotto or looking at the mnemonic plaques, whether in a book or actually placed in one's chamber? Certainly one could use the memory arts to call to mind the interior design of such pictorially organized spaces; and yet, something more basic still could serve as a mnemonic background to order one's spiritual exercises.³³

To help us bring this point into focus, and to supply an encoded mnemonic for the last stop on our mnemonic itinerary, let us imagine an epistle of gold with six vertical lines. Now we have a convenient way to designate Anthony Hoskins's "Epistle of Saint Bernard, known as the Golden Epistle" (1605).³⁴ The organizational mnemonic for this program designed to facilitate "orderly and Godly meditation" is based on the six grammatical cases, the most basic categories legislating how language is made to work meaningfully. Like the declensions, these six cases would have been among the first and the most fundamental rules that the student of Latin grammar would have memorized when he learned to read and write, and they would have stayed with him throughout his life. (As should be clear from examples mentioned so far—like the arrangement of pictorial space in Giotto's chapel and Featley's six points—six was an accepted and decorous unit in organizational mnemonics.) The six-tiered paradigm is explained:

For a forme and order of your prayer, this may bee a good and ready way, to follow the order of the six grammaticall cases: The nominative, the genitive, the dative, the accusative, the vocative, and the ablative. The nominative, that is, first to pray for yourself, that you may have ghostly strength and constancie. (Sig. S11)

Following the elaboration of the nominative case, which launches this six-part sequence, the reader passes on to the second case, the genitive. The author provides a literal (and liberal) associative connection between the next order of prayer and the Latin root of the case name:

Then you must pray for your genitours, your progenitours and parents, that is to say, your fathers and mothers, spirituall and carnall, as your ghostly fathers, or spirituall soueraignes, your godfathers, your godmothers, your natural father and mother, your grandfathers and grandmothers, your brothers and sisters, and all your kindred. (Sig. S12)

The use of the cases provides a ready-made paradigm for declining, or falling from, one place to the next (as the etymology of case, *casus*, implies). This pattern can then be applied to one's own concerns. I would also point out that this mental diagram of the six cases is described in terms of a "local" memory system, in which one positions himself at a specific place in an organizational mnemonic and then moves on.

In the third *place* is the dative case. *There* must you pray for benefactors, good doers, of whom you haue receiued any manner of gifts spirituall or temporall, vnto the wealth of your soule or body. In the fourth *place* is the accusative case, *where* you should pray for your enemies, such persons as by any means haue annoyed, hurt, or grieved you, either ghostly or bodily. (Sig. S12; my emphasis)

Continuing to explore the associative links that make for easy recollection, the fifth case, the vocative, is described as "the calling case, where you conueniently may call, cry, and pray vnto our Lord for all manner of persons that be out of the state of grace, either any infidelity, as Turkes, Sarazens, and such other" (sig. S12v).

In the final place, the sixth case, is the ablative (the "ab-lative"), "where thou must pray for all those that be *taken out* of this life, &c. and that dies or passed the same life in charitie, &c. and now haue need of prayer" (my emphasis, to highlight the pun). It is in connection with this last place that the entire paradigm is revisited so as to be mnemonically applied in miniature to this particular stage of meditation.

[Y]ou may keep a forme of the same order that is before, that is to say: In stead of the nominative, where you prayed for your selfe, you may now pray for all those that doe abide in paine for any default or offence done by your example or occasion: and for the genitive in the second place, for your parents, and all your kindred departed this life: and in the third place for the dative, pray for your benefactors passed: and for the accusative in the fourth place, you may pray for them that liue in paine, for any occasion or example that they gaue vnto you: and in that fift place for the vocative, pray for al them that haue greatest pains in Purgatory, & least help heere by the suffrage of prayers; and for the ablative in the sixt and last place, pray for all soules in generall. (Sigs. T1-T1v)

Imposed onto this entire scheme, "that you may be more apt to pray," is an exhortation to "call three things to remembrance, that is to say, what you haue beene, what you be, and what you shall be." This tripartite mnemonic formula tagged on at the end takes on added significance because of the strikingly repulsive imagery accompanying it. For example, to contemplate what we are, we are admonished to bring to mind a "muckheap or dunghill of filth, more vile then any vpon the earth if you remember what doth issue daily, and come forth out of the meates of your body." As for what we shall be, we are admonished "to remember then the joyes of heauen and paines of hell, and that both be infinit, endlesse and without rebate" (sig. T2). One final image, that of antithetical Cities of Memory, caps off the entire program and stands over and beyond the organizational mnemonic based on case endings:

Now for a conclusion of this worke, put before you, *as by case or imagination*, two large Cities, one full of trouble, turmoile and misery, and let that bee hell. The other Citie full of joy, gladness, comfort, and pleasure, and let that be heauen. *Look well on them both*, for in both be many dwellers and great company. (Sig. T4; my emphasis)

Reminiscent of the first two "weeks" of meditative points of focus in Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, the abstract references to each of these cities encourage and incite the subject to picture them on his own. The consequence is that the resulting visions of the bliss of Heaven and horror of Hell are likely to be more vivid because they are more intimately connected to the hopes and fears of the subject.

The entire paradigm therefore is an elaborate personal artificial memory scheme, with subsidiary schemes located within it that are designed to particularize the rules of its use. The organizational mnemonics within the larger structure contain encoded mnemonics that are to be appropriated by the individual. For as was typical of Renaissance memory devices—from the position of images in the Arena Chapel to this case-specific pattern for prayer—several and sometimes overlapping (and yet still discrete) mnemonic systems enhanced rather than confused apprehension of the whole design. Once the initial structure was conceived and put into practice, it was easy to move within it or to stand outside and glance back, so as to retrieve or invent specific memory images. Far from being a static process, the decorous use of the principles associated with the memory arts involves a dynamic movement between the structure of pictorial space and the ordering of one's thoughts—whether in Giotto's chapel, Lady Drury's Oratory, Saubert's emblematic chamber, a sermon modeled on Aaron's breastplate, or a mnemonically augmented version of Bernard's "Golden Epistle."

Welche von einem jeden Christen täglich in anschawung der
Hände zur Gottesfurcht können gebrauchte werden /
Zu sonderlichen Ehren und seliger Übung / Dem Ehrnvesten und Vornehmen H.
GEORGEN CAUPERTEN, R. E. Ober-Kämmerer zu Coburg, Seinem insonders Günstigen Herrn vnd Freunde / dedicirt Von Petro Iselburg / Kunst vnd Kupffstecher.

Also spricht Gott
im 5. Buch Moses
am 6. Capitel/v.
8. 9.

Du sollst davon reden /
wenn du in deinem Hause
stehst / oder auff dem Wege
gehst / wenn du dich nie-
derlegst / oder aufstehest.
Vnd sollt sie binden jhm
Zeichen auff deine Hand /
vnd sollen dir ein Denck-
mal seyn / vnd sollt sie über
deines Hauses Pforten
schreiben / vnd an die Tho-
re.

Hieb. 37. vers. 7.

Alle Menschen hat er
in der Hand / als ver-
schlossen / auff daß die
Leute lernen was er thut
solt.



Psal. 77. vers. 2.

Meine Hand ist des
Nachts aufgerichtet / vnd
steht nicht ab : Denn mei-
ne Seele wil sich nicht
trösten lassen.

Psal. 134. v. 1. & 2.

Siehe/lobet den H. Ern
alle Knechte des H. Ern/
die ihr sthet im Hause
des H. Ern : Hebet ewre
Hände auff im Heilig-
thumb / vnd lobet den
H. Ern.

O JESU ! descen-
de in me , ut ascen-
dam ad Te.

O Jesu ! steige her-
ab zu mir / damit ich
auffsteige zu dir.

A. D Er Anfang deiner Hand deutet die Schöpfung an/
Das hochverehrte Pfand / so dir Götze dar gehan/
In dem Er die Vernunft dir vorgelegt hat/
Vnd doch den Thieren viel Vernunft vertragen hat.
Vnd da Er dich gemacht / da du vor wahrheit nuch/
Er leitet von dir ab / was dem Thier widerpricht/
Darumb bedencke doch daß du seist in gantz/
Welcher vergelten lön Götze solte schöne Ding.

B. D Er Finger weist an die Ehre / so begangen
Mit Worten vnd mit That mit Eimen vnd Verlangen/
Wie sie mit nenden Galt vnd hochgeacht den Muth/
Mit Vnsittlichkeit Lust die Kaller trocken thut/
Wie sie mit lichen Sitten verschauet falsche Sacht/
Wann sie im Herzen suchet / tan mit dem Munde lachen/
Wie sie mit Lust vnd Trug des Armen kalten Schweiß
Den er mit Mühe vergoß / ganz auffjuruckten weiß/
Wie sie mit Augen frech tan in die Ferne sehen/
Vnd dan mit eins vergunzt / verliuset doch nach vielen.
O Mensch bedencke doch / die große Schuldens Last/
Die Moses gimerck / vnd du begangen hast.

C. D Er Mittelfinger dir den Mörder stellt dar/
Welcher die Euthet verspricht vor die Gefahr/
Welcher das Leben gibt / vnd merckst ab den Tod/
Vnd die Glückseligkeit verpfecht vnd die Noth/
Die Hände recket er auff / theilt seine Stimm/
O fromme Zeh / nimm den Hören Tod vernim/
Die Schale er wil Verdamnis wil er nicht/
So wahr er ewig lebt / mit rechten Munde spricht.
Die Gantz den Zund dämmert / in Abendmahl zu lege
Hut er sein Leib vnd Blut aus Günstigen versetzt.
Versucher mach dir seyn / welcher nicht ehlends laufft/
Welch auch der Ichmach Glaub das feste Gut erweist.

D. D Er Gelfinger soll dir ein stück Denckmahl seyn/
Das himmels Gündelmal / die Götzen bilden ein/
Die demal ein Stück des Lieb von Andern bilden wird/
Der Herrgott die Zeit mit Götzen ausgefüllt

Wenn der Mensch neben sich hat aller Engel Schaar/
Was jemahls in der Welt von Außerwirth war/
Wenn Er mit Augen hell schawet das Firmament/
Mit Oren Er vernimmt der Sengst Instrument/
Die führt er ohne End / den hohen Thron Klang/
Dann hier sein Harpfenspiel mit seinen Stimmen sang/
Dij alles übertriff / daß er Gott selber sich/
O Lichtgitz / O Lust / in reiner Flammen Licht.

E. D Er Ohrenfinger muß den Ohren schallen ein
Das / wenn alles vollbracht / wird das Gerichte fern/
Da Götze mit Dreibell streng leylich beklagten wil
Der Ruffe Zeit / vnd dann wegkun das Götzen Ziel.
Was Jammer vnd Leid wird der Götzen Reiz/
Antennen ohne Zahl / vnd doch nicht ohne Speit/
Wann sie mit Zehal hundert in die Fall
Abweichen muß von Götze / in die verbannt Stett.
Wie wird der arme Leib auff rechte Arme
Gezuckelt / Zerknuckelt der Mutter Reizerei
Wie wird die arme Seel schreyen das Ach vnd Weh/
Daß ihr in dieser Huch die größte Noth geßch/
Vnd doch gerechte Noth. Darumb die Ewig Zeit
Die ganz vneublich / bedenk in dieser Zeit.
Denn je gewiss / wer dert nicht steht vor Christi Stett/
Der heulend ligen muß im tausendsten Pfund.

F. D Er Creutzfinger all / damit bezeichnt hat
Den Hude der Natur / durch Gottes weisen Nach/
Erinnert dich das hier Creuz muß gelitten sein/
Wenn du in Gottes Reich herrlich wilt gehn ein.
Wer einmahl sinen wil am Lich den Abraham/
An rechte Creutzgrund / mit dem Tack kam/
Der muß mit Thranen Trost / werf gepöbel sein/
Vnd vor die süße Lust trümet den Mordten Wein.
Doch wie möchte was seyn das Leben dieser Zeit/
Langen so man seht die Läng der Ewigkeit.
Darumb frisch auff / das Creuz / auß Tränen Rhecken
Vnd folge Jesu nach / vnd folge seiner Stimm.

FIG. 1.8. Christ in your Hand. Peter Iselburg (c.1620). Photo courtesy of The Newberry Library.

GRAPHIC ITINERARIES AND RENAISSANCE METAPHORICS

To pursue the double movement traced in the previous section (from sacred text to mnemonic images, and from metaphoric images to the idea of language itself), let us continue to explore the assumptions underlying emblematic broadsides and related ephemeral forms that were meant to be taken in hand so that they might be taken to heart. In line with this, Peter Iselburg, in a moral broadside from the mid seventeenth century, used the hand as a simple mnemonic background for recalling one's place in the divine drama (Fig. 1.8).³⁵ The title informs the reader that he will find in this page "Sechs Geistliche Andachten," six spiritual devout meditations, which, by looking at one's hand on a daily basis, can be used to bring every Christian to a proper regard for God.³⁶ For just as Christ intervened in human history to intercede for mankind, the person who uses this mnemonic device permits the message of sacred Scripture to make a timely intervention in his own life. With one's hand serving as an organizational mnemonic, as an aid to meditation, it becomes a portable text; for once the numbers corresponding with the images have been committed to memory, one can then link them to the longer glosses and citations provided at the bottom of the image.

For example, this diagram provides six places to fix memory images—six special and personal points for meditation. Appropriately, the first mnemonic stop on this manual itinerary is Creation, located on the thumb, which colloquially is termed the beginning of your hand ("Der Anfang deiner Hand"). The four couplets corresponding to the section designated "A" reinforce the message of the image (and by virtue of their sing-song pentametric rhythm and simple rhyme are the more easily committed to memory). The sense of the passage likewise speaks of fundamental and prior ontotheological assumptions: In the beginning God gave Man the gift of Reason, thus separating him from the beasts and protecting him from sin; hence we should exercise our divine gift and think on how terrible it was to have strayed from the blissful state we had in our first Paradise.

On the second finger, the pointer or index finger ("Der Zeiger"), Moses points to the first two commandments. The verse calls attention to the Fall, and thus the sins that we have undertaken in both word and deed. Also here we are asked to look beyond the pointer, with its image and gloss, to that which it indicates, namely, the acknowledgment of our duplicitous nature, a necessary step in the devotional scheme which leads us to recognize our place in God's encompassing and ineluctable plan.

The name of the middle finger is glossed in a way that situates the Lutheran theological bearing of the devotional program, insofar as "Mittler"

(implying "the mediator") refers here to Christ rather than the Church or clergy. Consistent with this motif, the image on the middle finger is of Christ, who as our mediator proclaims "Come to me, All"; furthermore, he stands between (and thus "mediates" in both literal and theological senses) the two sacraments which facilitate our movement from the profane world to the sacred: the baptismal font and the cup of the eucharist. The poem reminds us that it is the mediator who assures us of safety from dangers, who gives us life, and, ultimately, who will rescue us from death.

The fourth finger, where traditionally one would wear a gold band as a memorial symbol of the sacrament of marriage, is referred to as the "Der Goltfinger" (the gold finger). The descriptive motto and accompanying verse, marked "D," both retain the previous memorial meaning and supercharge onto it another form of union which connotes spiritual treasure: "The indescribable Joys of Heaven." As the next set of verses makes clear, we are supposed to contemplate and weigh this situation in the light of eternity spent in Hell. The motto of the fifth finger, where sinners are burning and being tormented, is "O Eternity is a long time, indeed!" Using the slang term for this finger used when plugging one's ear ("Ohrenfinger"), we are admonished to let this finger keep us from hearing the wailing and screams of the damned, and to think on the righteousness of the vengeance of the Lord, who punishes sinners according to their just deserts. The image of Hellmouth is accorded the longest verse commentary of any of the other mnemonic indexes (perhaps to stress through performative means that eternity is long indeed).

While the fifth finger calls to mind the Day of Final Judgment, the central image in the palm of the left hand is of Christ trudging toward Calvary—which calls to mind God's ultimate sacrifice as a man and, further, which is emblematic of our own journey through life toward death. Thus the image (and the cross itself) is balanced by a man in contemporary dress who is shown doing what the motto counsels: to remember that the cross must be borne joyfully if one wants to be received into the hands of God. The final set of verses reiterates that in our hands we see figures of the cross which, when taken together (like the five fingers on the hand), indicate for us the nature of God's ways. The biblical sentence subscripted to this image, which can be taken to apply to the whole of manual mnemonic, comes from Mark 8: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." In addition to the program just described, the mnemonic technique integral to this devotional exercise is augmented, reflected, and commented on in the biblical verses surrounding the hand diagram, insofar as all of them refer to passages that evoke the hands.

For example, the first, at the top left, refers to God's words spoken through the "Books of Moses" (Deut. 6:8–9): "And thou shalt speak them

when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them *for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes*; And thou shalt write them upon the doorpost of thy house and upon thy gate" (my emphasis). Incidentally the underlying thrust of this passage—at once concerning the sacralization of everyday acts of commemoration and also declaring succinctly the fundamental basis of all mnemonic operations—shows up as well in a late Renaissance English emblem book, *Ashrea*, as the motto to the focal emblem on a frontispiece in which Christ's crucified body is the background image "on" which the various mnemonic places are to be imagined and "read" (Fig. 1.9).³⁷

The next biblical citation, below it, comes from Job 37:7: "The Lord sealeth up the hand of all mankind; that all men whom He hath made may know it." The verse at the top right comes from Psalm 77: "With my hand uplifted throughout the night, without ceasing; / My soul cannot find consolation or comfort whatsoever." This verse stirs one's imagination to see his own hands uplifted, in supplication; and perhaps he then will visualize and superimpose onto his own hands the special images provided on the diagram. They are associated with the accompanying verses, which explain and moralize the images and thus which would be likely to be called to mind along with the mnemonic places. What is more, once the penitent Christian has called this verse to mind, he is likely to continue reciting the rest of the psalm (verse 7)—and thus discover an especially apt passage for using this self-referential devotional mnemonic: "In the night I will call to remembrance my song; / I will commune with mine own heart; / And my spirit maketh diligent search." The last of the verses from the Old Testament comes from Psalm 134: "Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. / That stand in the house of the Lord in the night seasons. / Lift up your hands to the sanctuary, / And bless ye the Lord." Indeed, as already suggested, as the reader lifts his hands he will have before his eyes (like frontlets) the six encoded mnemonic images and recite the prayer that finally takes the penitent Christian from the Old Testament wisdom to that of the New Testament, with the emphatic plea: "O Jesu! descende in me, ut ascendam ad Te" (O Jesus, come down to me, that I might rise to you). This hand diagram provides several interlocking mnemonic schemes that are practical, simple devotional aids, as one seeks to raise his thoughts up to and by means of the Lord—in whose hand are the souls of the righteous (Wisd. of Sol. 3:1).

Closely related to this device, but bringing together a series of mnemonic cues and emblematic conceits, is an English broadside known as "The Gloves" (Fig. 1.10). The primary and secondary conceits, the didactic aim, and the instructions for using these gloves are declared explicitly in the title:

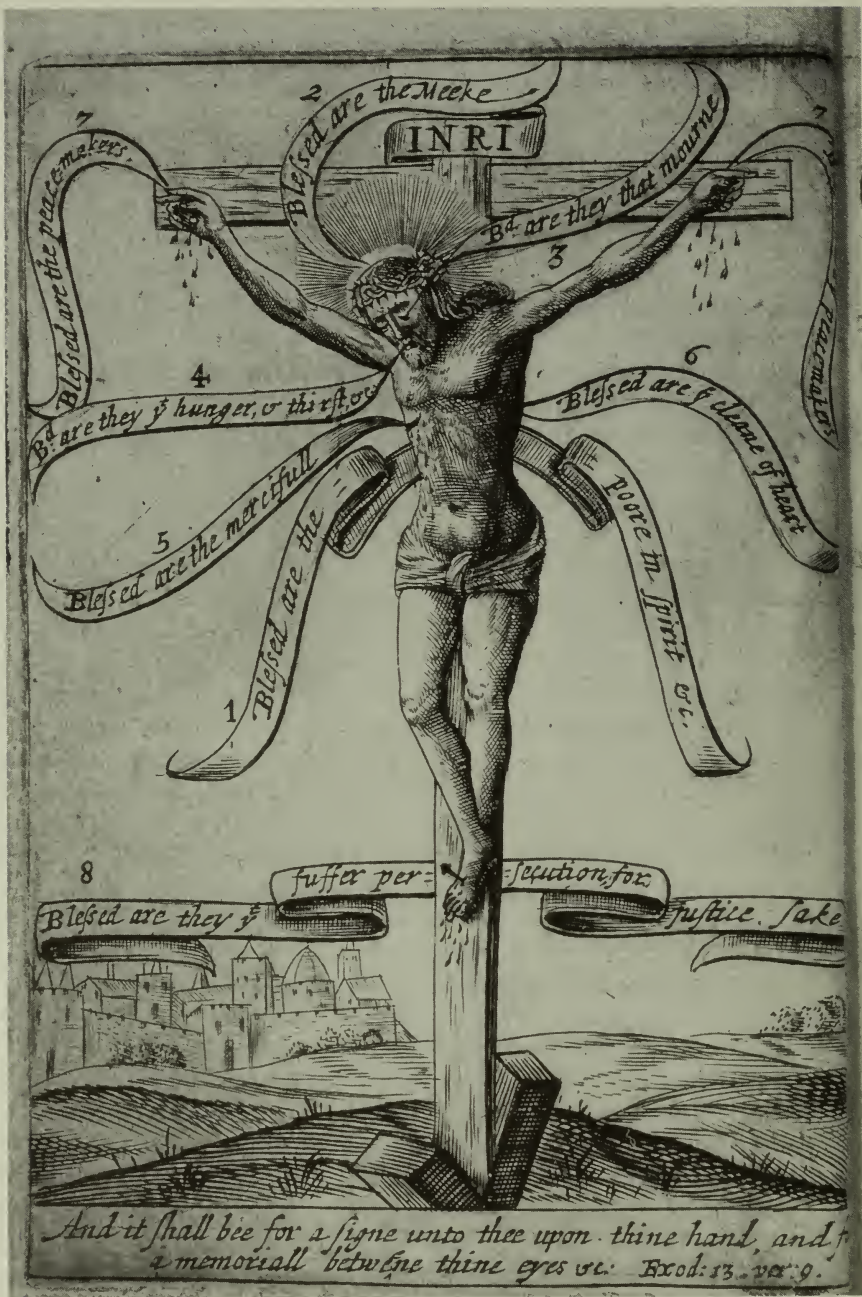


FIG. 1.9. Frontispiece. E.M., *Ashrea* (London, 1665). Photograph provided by courtesy of Glasgow University Library.

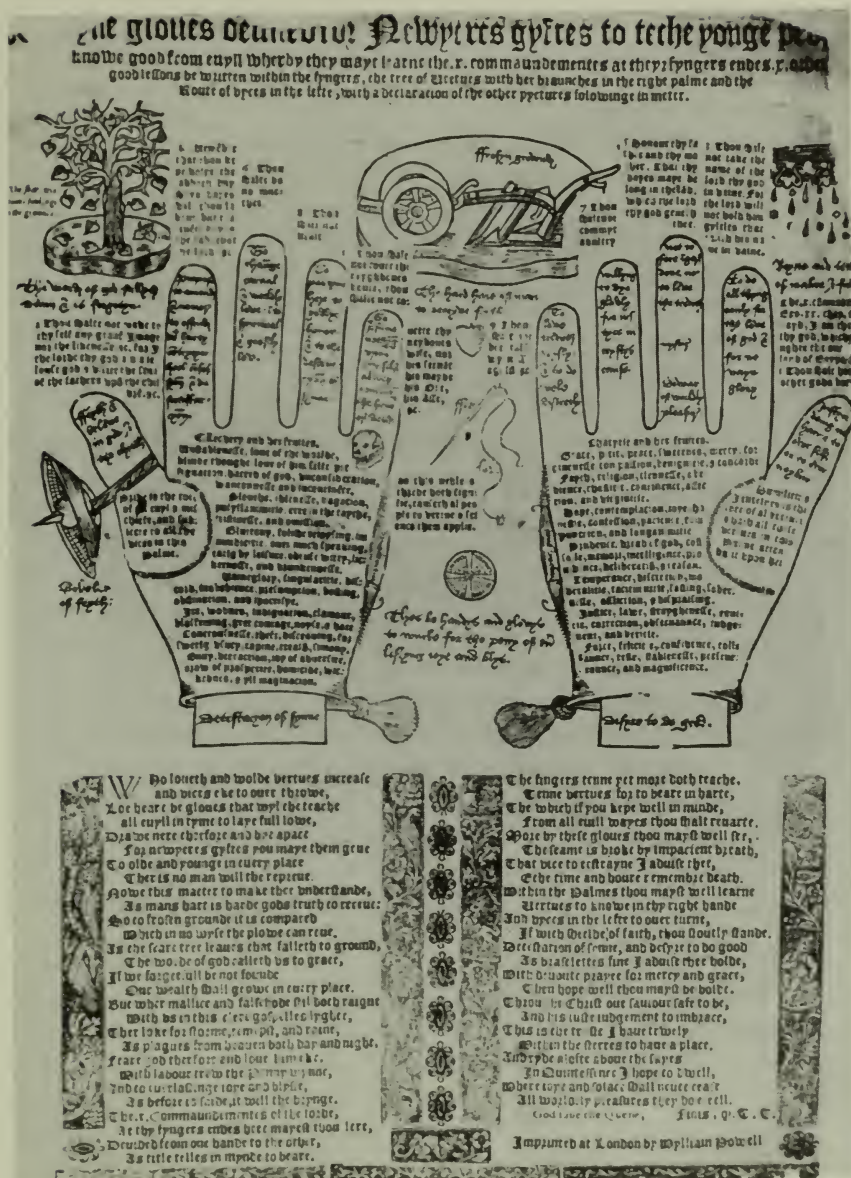


FIG. 1.10. "The Gloues" (London, c.1580). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

The Gloues devised for Newyeres gyftes to teche younge peo[ple to] knowe good from euyl wherby they may learne the x commandementes at theyr fyngers endes & other good lessons be written within the fyngers, the tree of Vertues with her braunches in the right palme and the Route of vyces in the lefte, with a declaration of the other pyctures folowinge in meter.³⁸

If the lessons were learned well, and the gloves used according to their proper end, then any time the child looked at his or her hands, the ten rules of moral conduct would be brought to mind. Perhaps he would then be deterred from using his ten fingers to steal or otherwise follow Satan's bidding. The gloves provided a pattern, indeed, not only for learning the means toward virtuous behavior but also for manufacturing an actual pair of gloves.

The sequence for reading the Ten Commandments on one's fingers alternates from hand to hand and is mapped out clearly by the commentary above the fingers. The first commandment corresponds to the right thumb; the second, the left thumb; the third commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the lord thy god in vaine," on the second finger on the right hand; the fourth commandment, "Remember that thou kepe holye the Sabboth day," on the second finger on the left hand, and so on. In addition to the Ten Commandments being the primary conceit of the gloves, each finger also has words of admonition (for example, on the third finger, "To change carnal & worldly love into spiritual and goostly love"). The tenth, which concludes the sequence, is the only one to have a visual emblem imposed onto the base of the finger. The emblem is a death's head, and the words admonish us "To presume nothyng upon ourself alway[s] remembryng the hour of death." Presumably when one does so, he thinks about his end and the state of his soul and is thus prevented from violating the tenth commandment (covering what is not one's own).

To understand how the other memory images on this broadside round out this elaborate emblematic display, we need to look at the poem. As with most of the moral emblem books of the day, the pictures illustrate the moral themes expounded by the accompanying poem. This fifty-two-line poem consists of thirteen quatrains, more or less in iambic tetrameter; because of the alternating rhyming words and sing-song patterning, the poem lends itself to being recited and easily memorized.³⁹ Thematically, however, it is divided into two sections, of six quatrains and then seven (even though page layout required that the beginning of the seventh quatrain be printed at the bottom of the left column). The first section breaks into two parts as well; the opening two quatrains introduce the idea of the gloves and relate what they will enable the wearer to accomplish.

Who loueth and would vertues increase
 and vices eke to ouer throwe,
 Loe heare be gloues that wyl the teache
 all euyll in tyme to laye full lowe,
 Drawne nere therfore and bye apace
 For newyeres gyftes you maye them geue
 To olde and younge in euery place
 Ther is no man will the repreue.

The next four quatrains of the first section explicate some of the visual emblems: a heart (in between the ninth and tenth fingers), the plow on frozen ground and the images to the left and right of it, and finally the penny, which is accorded the central place, both visually and thematically, on the entire broadside.

Nowe this matter to make thee understande,
 As mans hart is harde gods truth to receue:
 So to frosen grounde it is compared
 Which in no wyse the plowe can reue.
 As the seare tree leaues that falleth to ground,
 The worde of god calleth us to grace,
 If we forgetfull be not founde
 Our wealth shall grow in euery place.
 But wher mallice and falsehode stil doth raigene
 With us in this clere gospelles lyghte,
 Ther loke for storme, temepest, and raine,
 As plagues from heauen both day and night.
 Feare god therfore and loue him eke,
 With labour trew the Penny wyne,
 And to euerlastinge ioye and blysse,
 As before is daise, it will the brynge.

The matter to be understood is expressed by the emblems in particular and by the conceit of the gloves more generally. The aim of this verse explanation, as with pages in an emblem book, is to encourage the viewer to look beyond the image and toward its higher, more sacred, meanings and then to apply the precepts in one's own life.

Within this broadside we discover a prevailing thematic undercurrent of coldness in the main emblems that explains the need for gloves in general and for these emblematically spiritual gloves in particular. The first indication comes through the simile of man's hard heart being compared to frozen ground, neither of which is prepared and ready to receive what is proper to it. (Above the plow appear words identifying this emblem: "ffrosen

grownd.") The implication, of course, is that faith prepares the ground of the heart and makes it receptive for the seeds of "gods truth."

The next image moralized is that of the dried-out tree with scattered leaves. The third image admonishes us that when we allow malice and falsehood to eclipse the Gospel's heavenly light we are subjected to the foulest and most unseasonable of all conditions. The tree, though obviously linked to the poem by the description "The seare tree leaues faulynge to the ground," becomes an emblem in its own right with the moral tag: "The word of God fallyth down & is forgotyn." And the rightmost illustration of stylized rain bears the motto "Reyne and tempest of malice & falshode." Given the images of dry autumn and frigid winter and the accompanying storms, the gloves are a fitting commodity indeed to provide mortals some measure of protection against the inclement conditions of earthly life. From start to finish, the theme of material comfort corresponds symbolically to that of spiritual comfort.

What then does it mean to wear the gloves? How can we open up our hearts so that they will cease to be like a frozen field? The answer lies in the motto beneath the penny, in between the gloves, framed by the tassels: "These be handys and glovys to worke for the penny of ev[er]lastyng ioye and blys." The implication is that these gloves will enable you, by virtue of the work of your own hands in the world, to strive for that true penny, which will bring on (and is requisite to) everlasting bliss. The conceit of the true penny implies that which is pure and not corrupt in and of itself as well as something one can earn only through true (which is to say, honest) effort.

But the gloves are depicted as being torn. They need to be repaired before they can provide comfort and protection from the cold. Fortunately, needle and thread (designating "fear & Love" of God) are close at hand. And, between the two gloves, under the threaded needle, are the words: "as this nedle & threde doth signifie, causeth al people to vertue & science them applie." Once you put these two into action, you are ready to wear and benefit from the gloves. Wearing the gloves means that one is inclined toward virtue and knowledge, because he reflects on and obeys the commandments, practices the principal virtues inscribed on the right palm, and shuns the vices inscribed on the left hand. This is the "work," the "labour trew" mentioned in the poem that enables one to "wynne" the penny. English pennies circulating at the time of this broadside (around 1580), though minted somewhat earlier, had crosses on them—just as the illustration shows.⁴⁰ Thus the image of cross and the range of theological and economic associations here are doubly encoded into the prize for carrying out "labour trew." Further, Elizabethans most likely would have been familiar with the popular proverb, "No penny, no pardon." But more relevant still in this context are the Renaissance English sayings: "Empty hands deserve

no prayer" and "They that give nought get nought: th'emptie-handed pray in vaine."⁴¹

These gloved hands are full indeed. They carry the reminders of what is expected of one who would be open to the word of God that he might do God's bidding. The opening quatrains of the second part of the poem clarify the ten-fingered conceit and reiterate the importance of a special kind of remembering.

The ·x· Commaundementes of the lorde,
 At thy fyngers endes here mayest thou lere,
 Deuided from one hande to the other,
 As tittle telles in mynde to beare.
 The fingers tenne yet more doth teache,
 Tenne vertues for to beare in harte,
 The which if you kepe well in minde,
 From all euill wayes thou shalt reuarte.
 More by these gloues thou mayest well see,
 The seame is broke by impacient breath,
 That vice to restrayne I advise thee,
 Eche time and houre remembre death.

It is in this section of the poem that we discover why the gloves are torn. The initial breach was caused by impatience. This is literally and metaphorically the case in the illustration: Along the inner side of both gloves appears the word "impacyence." In a moral sense, impatience leads us to forget or resist our duties to God and humankind. The next quatrain explains other areas of thought that the gloves help one to bear in mind. Immediately below the right palm appear the words "Desyre to do good," and under the left, "Detestacyon of synne."

Within the palmes thou mayst well learne
 Vertues to knowe in thy right hande
 And vices in the lefte to ouer turne,
 If with shielde of faith, thou stoutly stande.
 Detestation of synne, and desyre to do good
 As braceletes fine I aduise thee holde,
 With deuoute prayer for mercy and grace,
 Then hope well thou mayst be bolde.

As a variation on the poem's "shielde of faith," a "Bokler of feyth" is tied to the left thumb—presumably to ward off the vices about which the left hand warns us. The buckler also relates to the precept which that finger is designed to call to mind: "ffeyth & beleve in god & the church." The final two

quatrains anticipate the heavenly reward for having mended and worn the gloves.

Throu Christ our sauour safe to be,
 And his iuste iudgement to imbrace,
 This is the truste I haue trewly
 Within the sterres to haue a place.
 And ryde alofte aboute the skyes
 In Quintessence I hope to dwell,
 Where ioye and solace shall neuer cease
 All worldely pleasures they do excell.

These gloves both outline and detail an exemplary pattern for behavior, and they do so in a form that displays the most rudimentary of emblematic and mnemonic techniques. Further, the simple form of the poem, conducive to memorization, also serves to encourage ongoing edification. Once the gloves on this broadside have been read and learned—and, perhaps, even made out of cloth for an even more worldly and practical use—if the broadside is lost or destroyed, one could still recall the poem by reflecting on the key images and, when looking at one's hands, visualize the ten special points of contemplation.

The conceit of gloves, though peculiar in this chockablock presentation of the social and religious saws and commonplace images of the Elizabethan Church settlement, appears in many other cultural settings as well. The taste for such an organizational mnemonic device (patterned on the image of one's hand, covered with instructional designs, and printed on paper so as to facilitate being transferred onto cloth) survives, or reappears, as late as the mid nineteenth century.⁴² A souvenir (in the fullest sense of the term) of the Great Exhibition of 1851 used the same kind of mnemonic techniques as "The Gloues" to help the user recognize his or her place within a larger, more encompassing scheme (Fig. 1.11). It was called the "Hand Guide to London"—and it was quite literally that.⁴³ Like its Elizabethan predecessor, it helped the visitor find his way (Fig. 1.12). Instead of Christ on his way to Calvary being assigned the central place in one's palm, in this more secular hand-map, which turns one's own hand into a portable aide-mémoire, the place of precedence is given, appropriately, to the spectacular Crystal Palace. Similar in kind to Renaissance mnemonics patterned after the hand, the Great Exhibition souvenir glove supplied the user with a fixed set of points and paths. And like Renaissance hand-diagrams in general, once one selected a course to follow, one followed it in sequence but still had the liberty to choose which of the tangents to pursue at what time. Once one has taken up such a pattern, he can keep in mind entire structures of thought—up to

and including the order if not the main ideas of entire books, chapter by chapter and section by section (see Appendix for a basic hand-mnemonic of this book).

But even though any image has the potential to become a memory image, every image is not automatically a memory image. The virtually endless possibilities for devising suitable backgrounds and images in the Renaissance fostered mental operations that took liberties with associative thinking in general and, more particularly, licensed a liberal way of conceptualizing information that brought together metaphor and metonymy.⁴⁴ Metaphor, the rhetorical figure of translation, enables two unlike objects to be compared, whereas metonymy, the figure signifying “a change in name,” substitutes the name of some object or idea for another to which it has some relation. Thomas Wilson, among other compilers of rhetorical handbooks, recognized distinct differences between metaphor and metonymy and classified both under the heading of “Trope”—an “alteration of a worde or sentence, from the proper signification, to that which is not proper.”⁴⁵ For Wilson, a metaphor is “an alteration of a worde, from the proper and naturall meaning, to that which is not proper, and yet agreeth thereunto by some likenesse, that appeareth to be in it,” whereas metonymy, the trope of transmutation, is explained: “when a word hath a proper signification of the owne, and being referred to an other thing, hath an other meaning” (p. 175). These tropes reflect, and are themselves based on, the most elementary of mental operations: metaphor, involving the recognition of similarity in difference, and metonymy, noticing difference among similar things. As Kaja Silverman has explained, another way of understanding these processes, following Aristotle, is to observe that “metaphor is in essence the exploitation of conceptual similarity, and metonymy the exploitation of conceptual contiguity.”⁴⁶

This distinction can help us understand the fundamental psychological operations of Renaissance mnemotechnics, especially when seen in the light of Quintilian’s warning about the limits of symbolic thinking in the memory arts more generally:

For thoughts do not call up the same images as material things, and a symbol requires to be specially invented for them, although even here a particular place may serve to remind us, as, for example, of some conversation that may have been held there. (*Inst. Or.* 11.2.24)

The invention of images for the Roman orator, like the composition of allegories in the Latin Middle Ages, and like the construction of places within memory theaters in the Renaissance, always had to be directed toward some prefigured end. Thus Quintilian’s critique of mnemotechnics



FIG. 1.11. "Hand Guide to London" (London, 1851).



FIG. 1.12. Glove Map of London (London, 1851).

parallels Ferdinand de Saussure's critical contention that a system of signs (based on the compound relation of signifier and signified) is a form and not substance.⁴⁷ Further, mnemonic imagery is subject to the same limits and liberties as any semiotic system—including, of course, language; and further, with special relevance to compositional practices during the Renaissance, mnemonic imagery is subject to the same kind of critical speculation as that applied to tropes and figures.

For example, this is the first topic addressed in Henry Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* (1577), a text whose very title is grounded in one of the oldest linguistic-metaphoric fields (the florilegium or anthology). Just as gardens represent mortal artifice applied to rustic nature, so eloquence corresponds to man's artifice applied to rude speech; and the book itself is like a ground-plot in which exemplary specimens are gathered and arranged decorously and orderly. "Necessity," wrote Peacham, "was the cause that Tropes were fyrst invented."⁴⁸ He then explained the reason for their timely invention in words that echo what surely passed as a commonplace understanding of this notion.⁴⁹

[F]or when there wanted words to expresse the nature of diverse thinges, wise men remembring that many thinges were very like, thought it good to borrow the name of one thing, to expresse another, that did in something much resemble it, and so began to use translated speech, and declare their meaning by wordes that made a likely similitude, of those thinges which they signified. (Sig. B1v)

Figures, and metaphors in particular, were seen as the means to translate ideas into speech, to say something in terms of another. Peacham's discussion goes on to assert that orators found this especially useful, because "by this meanes, thing were well set out, matters well expressed, and causes well commended, and . . . by translation they might utter their mindes largely."

Though the use of figures like *translatio*, or metaphor, arose from necessity, those who use these figures must themselves serve necessity, or propriety. The rhetorical figure *metaphora* was credited with conveying meanings from one place to another. Thus it was aptly "Englished by" George Puttenham as "the figure of transporte."⁵⁰ The traditional explanation for the "necessity of metaphor" in the seventeenth century resided in the "recognition of the incompleteness of explicit statement."⁵¹ According to Ben Jonson's notes under the heading "De orationis dignitate," the elegance and "Propriety" of words rests in one's ability to "draw them forth to their own just strength and nature, by way of Translation, or *Metaphore*. But in their Translation wee must serve necessity."⁵² And so, according to Peacham, metaphor was invented out of a necessity to express the nature of diverse

things and, according to Jonson, our use of it was bound by what common sense tells us is decorous, or necessary.

The appeal to "serve necessity" when translating an idea by means of another advocated here (and which can be seen at work in mnemonic imagery as well) stands over and against the fear of the unchecked circulation of virtually limitless meanings. Walter Benjamin, in his study of baroque allegory, speaks about this:

Any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else. With this possibility a destructive, but just verdict is passed on the profane world: it is characterized as a world in which the detail is of no great importance. But it will be unmistakably apparent, especially to anyone familiar with allegorical exegesis, that all of the things which are used to signify derive, from the very fact of their pointing to something else, a power which makes them appear no longer commensurable with profane things, which raises them into a higher plane, and which can, indeed, sanctify them.⁵³

This "possibility," that any relationship can mean absolutely anything else, may make some art historians and literary theorists uncomfortable because it extends indefinitely the hermeneutic horizon of interpretation. And yet, clearly, no connection is too remote for someone who is constructing a private memory theater to discover, or forge, a link. Our way beyond this theoretical impasse comes in the early modern notion of "necessity." It is the necessity of a mnemonic image's capacity to signify, paradoxically, that limits its range of meanings in terms of a categorical distinction or nominal context. For example, an everyday object like a nail, when viewed in a Christian allegorical context, becomes a mnemonic device standing for Christ's sacrifice.

As we continue to sort out the epistemological implications of mnemonic theory and practice, let us keep close at hand Benjamin's contention that the process of *allegoresis*, like early modern metaphors in general, simultaneously can elevate and devalue the profane world. Benjamin observed further that allegory, fundamentally, is "a form of expression" (p. 162); and thus he suggests that allegory can be analogized to speech and to writing since they too are "forms" which are bound by sets of rules for conceptualizing and expressing matters and ideas. Accordingly, metaphor and metonymy, as rhetorical and tropological processes that give rise to fundamental structures of thought, must be analyzed in Renaissance mnemotechnics as being more than mere generative and illustrative techniques. To understand more about the early modern mentality of those who were adept at regulating the play of emblems and figures in constructing memory theaters, I propose we turn our attention to an illuminating comparison suggested by Jean-Louis Baudry.

To help us understand the dynamic process of how we represent ideas to ourselves, Baudry proposed a model that linked Freud's system for analyzing dreams and the film projector. This is an appropriate connection because both have a capacity for figuration and involve a translation of thoughts into images, and reality extended to representations.⁵⁴ The same applies to the construction and use of artificial memory systems. To see how and to what extent this is the case, I would build on Baudry's notion of the powerful way the cinema makes the image seem more real than what we have come to recognize and nominate as "the real." (This effect, as I am discussing it here, also sets the scene for my analysis of images of death in Chapter 4.)

Although Baudry's model is encumbered by a post-Althusserian premise that the material conditions of power are concealed at the very instant their effects are observed in the world, still it provides a useful way to explore how our own allegories of inner vision operate—whether internally guided by mnemonic principles typical of Renaissance metaphors or, as Baudry argues, externally directed by an invisible hand (of the filmmaker) whose manipulations are themselves occluded by the cinematic apparatus which represents images to the viewer and tricks him into believing he has a privileged perspective and therefore special power over those same images. What we can take from Baudry's model is the way in which the viewer is affected by those represented images, and the end to which he puts them once he recognizes the limits and the liberties of such a metaphoric process—of such an ideological ruse. Constructing memory palaces, like imagining Baudry's cinematic effects, cannot take place without the viewer's initial complicity and his willful investment in specific referents and meanings associated with the already provided images, as simulacra.

With this model in mind we can now consider what sort of mental engagement is involved when we create, when we symbolically inhabit, and when we visually patrol the inner chambers of a memory palace. As with our experiences in the scripting of dreams and waking fantasies, we assume a point of view from which we can image ourselves engaged in some activity. We can either watch the action as if from the point of view allowed by a camera lens or watch a broader scope which includes the image of ourselves engaged in the action. The former case is comparable to the up-and-down movement of the camera caused by the roving reporter in documentaries or the self-conscious artist in *cinéma vérité*. The latter case, when transferred to an artificial memory palace, is comparable to our watching a playback on a video security camera of our movement from room to room within our mind's eye. A more complicated perspective on how one constructs and visualizes the use of a memory palace takes into account both positions just discussed. Such a point of view, strictly speaking, is not a single point of view; rather, it is the possibility of imagining ourselves comprehending the

scenario from both positions at once—both as if from outside and above and also from inside at eye level—and, to use the language of cinematography, cutting back and forth from the one shot to the other. Irrespective of which position (or locus for visualization) dominates our consciousness regarding our relation to a mnemonic construction, we must fashion some version of a parallel and hypothetical world—one answering to its own internal and coherent logic and which is based on fragments and traces of our accumulated everyday experience.

This “other world,” this imagined terrain with its mnemonic sites and architectural plans, as with Freud’s notion of dreamwork, carries within it an underlying and necessary program of its rules for operation. The fundamental operating principle is that images and ideas drawn from our perception of daily reality have been transformed and translated into a highly symbolic and often idiosyncratically generated code. This code is composed of both words and images, and the terms of this resulting “language” bear a relation of some sort to real objects and events. Otherwise, our effort to recollect and revisit them in a memory palace would be futile. In dream analysis, however, the relation between dream and dreamwork is more complicated. And yet, where the conscious construction of mnemonic devices is concerned, it is essential that one be able easily to decode the invented symbols into the things they were invented to represent so as to apply that information for practical purposes. In psychoanalysis, especially where the analysis of dreams and anomalous mental operations are concerned, not only do the images and symbolic actions constitute the matter to be decoded by the analyst, but so does the very language in which the dreamwork or hallucinations are recounted. Thus, unlike Freud’s notions of primary and secondary processes in the constitution of dreamwork and its subsequent analysis, the construction of a memory palace emphasizes synthesis; and what is more, it is motivated by a conscious and self-willed desire to remember. The mental strategies used by the subject of analysis may be the same as those used by the mnemotechnician (condensation, displacement, and so on), but in dreamwork these procedures are used to mask or repress content, rather than to recollect the coded information.⁵⁵ For as Freud himself noted, “The fact that dreams are distorted and mutilated by memory is accepted by us but in our opinion constitutes no obstacle; for it is no more than the last and manifest portion of a distorting activity which has been in operation from the very start of the dream’s formation” (p. 629).

This brings to mind a noteworthy similarity between the two analytical schemata just mentioned: Just as it is the task of the analyst to recover the latent meanings of the patient, so the mnemonist recovers the products of his ingenuity. The mnemonist, however, may not stop to consider the origin of the images and words he uses to construct his symbolic mental world

within a world, because this is not as important as being able to revisit, retrieve, and read again the coded syntax. These two models, of psychoanalysis and of mnemotechnics, coincide in the documented case history of the most celebrated mnemonist of the twentieth century (while a psychiatric patient under the care of A. R. Luria). Apparently, "S" could not stop thinking according to mnemonic techniques and, what is more frightening, when he began his treatment, he was often unable to forget his previously imagined itineraries and mnemonic tableaux. This aberrant and excessive manifestation of the memory arts, which came about independent from training in the classical Western rhetorical tradition, makes it easier to see what may well be considered a fundamental model of human knowledge based on image transcription and ultimately on recognition.⁵⁶ S was unaware that he was reproducing classical mnemonic techniques; I believe therefore that his method for coding and recovering privately generated symbols provides an ideal way to learn more about the practical application of a typical artificial memory system.

When S. read through a long series of words, each word would elicit a graphic image. And since the series was fairly long, he had to find some way of distributing these images of his in a mental row or sequence. Most often (and this habit persisted throughout his life), he would "distribute" them along some roadway or street he visualized in his mind. Sometimes the street was his home town. . . . On the other hand, he might select a street in Moscow. Frequently he would take a mental walk along . . . Gorky Street . . . beginning at Mayakovsky Square, and slowly make his way down, "distributing" his images at houses, gates, and store windows. . . . The setting he chose for "mental walks" approximates that of dreams, the difference being that the setting in his walks would immediately vanish once his attention was distracted but would reappear just as suddenly when he was obliged to recall a series he had "recorded" this way.⁵⁷

The Renaissance compiler of mnemonic commonplaces Johannes Romberch advocated exactly such a mental walk through a familiar town. He also suggested that the succession of buildings visited in this City of Memory follow according to the alphabet (Fig. 1.13). Lodovico Dolce's version of Romberch's memory arts thesaurus makes this easy to see and comprehend. The first building on one's mental walk begins with the letter "A" and corresponds to the building complex labeled "Abatia," which signifies the seat of the local ecclesiastical activities.⁵⁸ The mnemonic traveler then moves to the left, and then down the page—a move that corresponds to going down the streets of this city. Here he finds a discrete mnemonic scheme within the larger mnemonic program: the "B" part of town. Here he finds five places, each neatly labeled and each beginning with the letter "B"



FIG. 1.13. Memory City. Johannes Romberch, *Congestorium Artificiosae Memoriae* (1553), sig. D4. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

(the number 5, we recall, was considered a fundamental cluster for practical mnemonics). Each of the places in this "B" cluster is distinguished by the images associated with the buildings for which they stand. And what is more, the sequence in which one is to visit the places is indicated ingeniously by the progression of the five vowel sounds. The designated path takes you to the places of "*Barbitonsor*" (barber-surgeon), "*Bellator*" (armorer), "*Bibliopola*" (bookseller), and finally "*Bovdida*" (ox monger) and "*Bulculus*" (cowherd) (my emphasis).

To get another look at the organization of such Cities of Memory (which had been described tersely by Quintilian, clinically by Luria, and more extravagantly by Dolce), we can turn to Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*. In this semiotic fiction Marco Polo weaves together recollections of his travels for Kublai Khan who, we are told, "does not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities visited on his expeditions."⁵⁹ The following description of a particularly dreamlike city is obviously modeled on the itineraries described in many mnemonic handbooks and manuals.⁶⁰

Zora has the quality of remaining in your memory point by point, in its succession of streets, of houses along the streets, and of doors and windows in the houses. . . . Zora's secret lies in the way your gaze runs over patterns following one another as in a musical score where not a note can be altered or displaced. The man who knows by heart how Zora is made, if he is unable to sleep at night, can imagine he is walking along the streets and he remembers the order by which the copper clock follows the barber's striped awning, then the fountain with the nine jets, the astronomer's glass tower, the melon vendor's kiosk, the statue of the hermit and the lion, the Turkish bath, the cafe at the corner, the alley that leads to the harbor. This city which cannot be expunged from the mind is like an armature, a honey-comb in whose cells each of us can place the things he wants to remember: names of famous men, virtues, numbers, vegetable and mineral classifications, dates of battles, constellations, parts of speech. Between each idea and each point of the itinerary an affinity or a contrast can be established, serving as an immediate aid to memory. (Pp. 15–16)

Mnemonic walking tours—whether those of Luria's troubled patient S or the systematic five-building clusters of Romberch or the more self-consciously aesthetic program of Calvino's Marco Polo—can help us see more clearly the mental operations required to set up and to activate the artificial memory. All such techniques make use of, and can be discussed in terms of, the main categories or "orders of thought" outlined by Jacques Lacan. Throughout his writings Lacan refers to the Imaginary Order (per-

ception, hallucination, and their derivatives), the Symbolic Order (discursive and symbolic action), as well as the Real.⁶¹

It may be instructive to comment in passing that devising and using an artificial memory scheme relies on each of these registers; the memory artist begins with real objects or places to set up a background, and then, building on his perceptions or aberrations of symbols and emblems, he generates viable mnemonic images. Another closely related way to think about the mental operations associated with mnemonic designs is in terms of metaphor and metonymy. The encoded mnemonic elements are based on visual cues (as a kind of metaphorical, an associative, or a paradigmatic transfer of meaning), and, at the same time and within the same frame, they can be based on substituted objects that somehow are related to one another by virtue of a linguistic connection (a kind of metonymic or syntagmatic operation).

Keeping in mind these various psychoanalytic and psycholinguistic models for comprehending what goes on when one engages in mnemonic play, we can easily discern the unifying and primary feature in this complex and concerted mode of visualization, one which depends on spatialized backgrounds and the confluence of language and images. To describe it (and to anticipate the theoretical trajectory of Chapter 2), I would draw on Ferdinand de Saussure's contention that "[i]n language, as in any semiological system, whatever distinguishes one sign from another constitutes it. Difference makes character just as it makes value and the unit [that segment of a chain corresponding to a certain concept]."⁶² Images used as mnemonic devices depend on linking them to a fragment of a word, theme, or idea—whether those used by Luria's patient, Calvino's Marco Polo, or John Wilis's Elizabethan audience. As has been explained, one might choose an image representing something that sounded like the word to be recalled, or one that strikingly signified its opposite by means of an outlandish representation. The more striking—the more hallucinatory—the better, because this assured that, irrespective of what design one selected, one could easily recall and return to that invented symbol or idea. Therefore difference, noticeable difference, is the generative principle in this simultaneously constructive and associative memory process. For example, William Fulwood (following Gratoroli's popular treatise on health and memory) stressed the importance not only of difference but of hyperbolic difference in the composition and effective use of artificial memory theaters:

in placing or setting of ye images or figures in their places the thing is alwaies to be placed with mery, a meruelious or cruel act, or some other unac-customed maner: for mery, cruell, iniurious, merueilous, excellently faire, or

excedingly foule things do change and moue ye senses, & better styre up the Memorie, when ye minde is much occupied about such things. also the images ar varied by ye transposition & transumption of ye letters: as if I wold remember nep [an herb], I shal place a pen and for a tiran [tyrant], a rauening wolfe.⁶³

The two examples given here parallel quite closely two of the strategies described by Sigmund Freud in his discussion of how to unravel and decode dreamwork in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Reversing the letters in “nep” and then translating the new linguistic term into a familiar object is a more complex manifestation of mnemotechnical thinking than is the simple association of an animal—a wolf—with a despotic ruler (a commonplace image then as now). The first example, “the transposition and transumption” of the letter, illustrates a syntagmatic connection (reminiscent of the rhetorical function of metonymy); and the second example, concerning a simple association, illustrates a paradigmatic connection (reminiscent of the rhetorical function of metaphor). But in addition to exemplifying the particular processes used in each case, together these examples remind us that such deliberate transpositions and associations, whether complex or simple in scope, exist side by side in dreamwork and in memory play.

Whether based on similarity or opposition, on metonymy or metaphor—or on some combination of both—the associative links forged by letters and by images were integral in the construction of Renaissance memory theaters. Situating the memory arts in terms of the models taken from rhetorical handbooks, cinema, and psychoanalysis not only helps us see the fundamental operations animating this cultural practice but also makes clear that further study of mnemonics will deepen our understanding of Renaissance symbol theory and “applied metaphors.”

THE PLACE OF MELANCHOLY IN “THE MAP OF MORTALITIE”

To help bring these issues into sharper focus, and to clarify our own critical vocabulary for assessing the fluid imagery typical of the emblematically oriented mnemonic tradition under discussion, I would mark a difference between retroactive memory and monitory memory.⁶⁴ Retroactive memory concerns things that have already been. This kind of memory involves mental cues triggering the recollection of images, events, or ideas from a prior time—irrespective of whether their status was textual, spiritual, or phenomenal. Examples might include recalling an episode in an involved text whether a classical epic or an allegorical romance, commentaries on the Bible or specific verses, or the virtues of specific plants in an herbal. Indexes

and ramified diagrams were among the most common textual features used to organize information of whatever kind so it could be readily retrieved and used; the visual counterparts to such epitomes were composite itineraries or diagrammatic “road maps” linking key episodes so one could find his way and later recall key “places,” whether in the shifting landscape of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* or the order of books, chapters, and verses in the Bible (Figs. 1.14 and 1.15). To be sure, biblical mnemonics abound in the period, ranging from easy-to-use sets of abbreviations like the elaborate plan printed in full by Brancacci⁶⁵ to more convoluted “ready-made” mnemonics like Anshelm’s *Rationarium Evangelistarum*, in which the four Gospels are arranged so that, when scanning the tableau for the encoded memory aids to recover specific verses, your eyes are directed to trace out the shape of a cross (Fig. 1.16).⁶⁶ Functioning here as an organizational mnemonic in its own right, the cross is both a commemorative icon (encouraging us to call to mind Christ’s sacrifice) and a symbol of hope (and a sign of God’s grace). What is more, it is set against a background image standing for the specific book, in this case an eagle for John the Evangelist.⁶⁷ Retroactive memory, then, also concerns the custody of repositories in artificial memory—whether a niche or a place on the stage of a memory theater, or a finger joint in a mnemonic device using the hand as a background (as in Appendix). This kind of memory presumes that whatever is to be recalled once had been observed, studied, or imagined and then later was reconfronted and, by some means, lodged in one’s memory. Basically, retroactive memory concerns what has happened.

The other, more complex, kind of memory is “monitory memory.” Wise sayings collected from venerated texts depend on this kind of memory to accomplish their salutary aims. Although *sententiae*, broadly speaking, can function as the object of retroactive memory, let us hear Plutarch on this matter:

Above all, the memory of children should be trained and exercised; for this is, as it were, a storehouse of learning; and it is for this reason that mythologists have made Memory the mother of the Muses, thereby intimating by allegory that there is nothing in the world like memory for creating and fostering.⁶⁸

By the same token, as we saw in “The Gloves,” the fourth commandment admonishes us even as it relies on retroactive memory. It emphasizes the importance of commemorative activities in moral conduct: “Remember that thou kepe holye the Sabboth day.” In doing so, one looks back to and imitates God’s resting after he brought into being the created order. Implicit in recalling and acting on this commandment is a symbolic reenactment or imitation of the divine cosmogonic act.⁶⁹ Such a commemorative



FIG. 1.14. Mnemonic landscape to Book 3 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, trans. John Sandys (London, 1640), between sigs. I1 and I2.

activity of imitation (in this case of the divine acts of creation) is at the core of many religious rituals and doctrines, as well as at the heart of devotional exercises and related cultural practices. This process of commemoration, though not necessarily the things commemorated, has been theorized succinctly in cultural-anthropological terms by Mircea Eliade: "organizing a space" repeats the paradigmatic work of the divine. And in so doing—whether individually or communally, whether through organizational or encoded mnemonics, whether using retroactive or monitory memory—we affirm and reassert the continuity of the created order. Likewise, the fifth commandment, which instructs us to honor parents, reminds us of an ethical duty (understood here as a sacred one); it aims at insuring obedience to, and thus preserving peace within, the familial order—and, by extension, the ecclesiastical and national order as well. When we are called on to exercise monitory memory, we are instructed and warned; we are made aware of what we "should know," and we have clarified for us exactly what we "should do."

The perspective of monitory memory originates from the vantage point of ethical prescience; rooted in the past, and yet implying a transtemporal domain of knowledge, it projects one's thoughts into the future so as to instruct him about the present. (This will be discussed at length in the next chapter as it pertains to John Milton's philosophy of poetics.) Monitory memory concerns what might happen or what will happen. For example, the end of monitory memory is epitomized in the death's head—as a visual reminder of man's ultimate end. Often accompanied by the motto *memento mori*, it admonished the viewer to remember that he too is mortal and therefore should look to his soul. Such a monitory emblem is designed to regulate conduct; further, it stands as a warning of the eventual presence of one's own death and dissolution. In the fifth finger on the "Gloves" broadside, as well as Anshelm's organizational mnemonic for the eleventh chapter of John, the death's head functions as an encoded mnemonic in a complicated network of retroactive memory images.

More generally, however, as a monitory emblem, the death's head evokes, initially, a sense of melancholy. As Thomas Browne put it, "It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature."⁷⁰ Although Christianity traditionally and scripturally asserts a hope for eternal life after death, intimations of remorse and trepidation can plague even those who live faithfully in this hope. Francis Bacon succinctly expressed this paradox in his essay "Of Death."

Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations, there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. (*Works*, 12:84)

Prima Ymago Iohannis

Vna vigena dūstichoꝝ loīs claudī euangeliū hoc est
Viginti capitibus & vno.
Nimī de Trinitate & de verbo incarnato &c. II. De
 nuptijs in Chana Galilee et numularijs extra tēplum
 pulsus. III. De Nicodemo. IIII. De muliere Samaritana
 circa fontem & de Regulo. V. De probatica piscina
 VI. De quinqꝝ panibus et de eukaristia

Que singula subiectis remiscimur versibus

Alta docens aquila: verbum caro fit: veniuntꝝ
Vox testis: alij tres quoꝝ Nathanael.
Bis tria vasa replent noua vina: fugat quoꝝ fūne
Vndentes: templum soluite signat eis.
Cēlica dogmata dat Nicodemo: tingit vterꝝ
Preſert baptista: predicat atꝝ Hiesum.
Dum lassus fonte residet: se Samaritane
Pandit: curatur Regule filius hic
Extra piscinam iussit tibi languide surge.
Nil sine patre facit: credite vel Moisi.
Rocna iacent vbi millia quinqꝝ cibati: fieri vult
Rex: mare calcare: amen est caro vita dñs.

Prima videm Aquile facies: sed imago Iohannis
Nec docet immēsi que genitura dei a iij

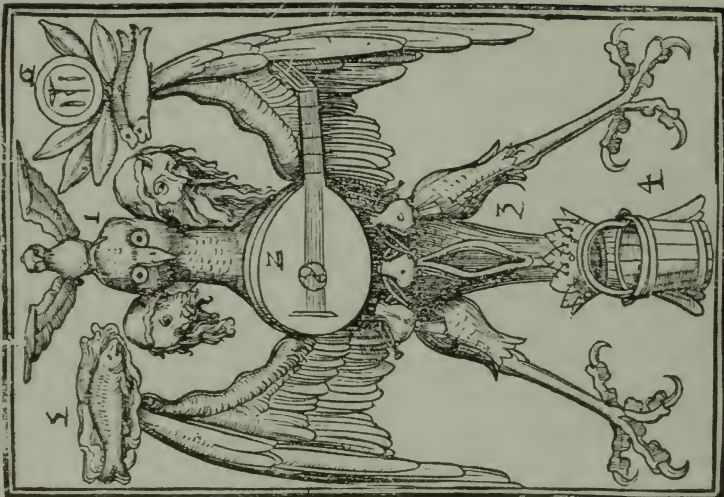


FIG. 1.15. First Mnemonic Tableau of the Book of John. Thomas Anshelm, *Rationarum Evangelistarum* (1505), sig. A2. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

VII. De scenophegia seu festo tabernaculorum. **VIII.**
De muliere deprehensa in adulterio. **IX.** De ceco a nati
uitate. **X.** De pastore bono per totum. **XI.** De resuscita
tione Lazari. **XII.** De muliere Magdalena ad pedes
Iesu accedente.

Grandis murmur erat scenophegie: bonus est non:
Doctrinans clamat: scilicet sit exit ab hijs.
Nic moecham saluat. lux. testis principumq;
Dymonio nati quem lapidare volunt.
Militi spuro Niclus tangens: maledicunt
Ceco ludere: se manifestat ei.
Iudeis loquitur. ego sum pastor bonus: vnum
Cum patre: blasphemii ceu lapidare volunt.
Lazarus hic fuit incertus: fideq; fororum:
Confilio Cayphas vaticinando preest.
Martha ministrat: cenat Lazarus: Sc foror vngit.
Nunc asinus: granu. luxq; sequitur ibi.

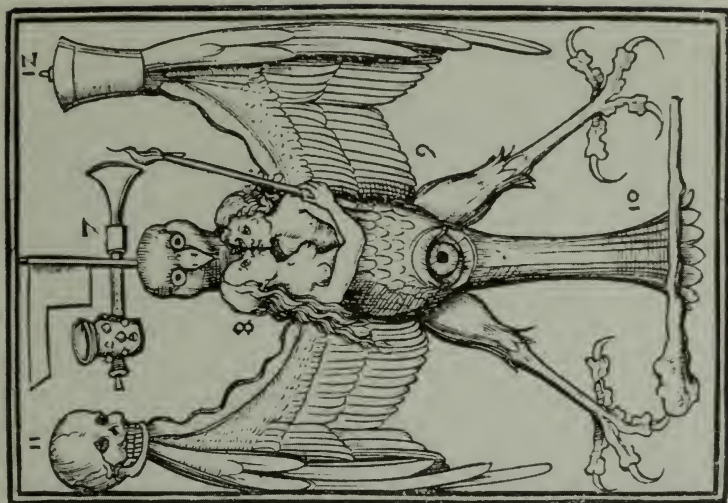
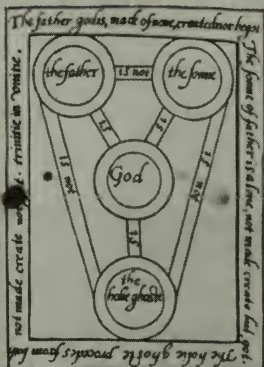


Fig. 1.16. Second Mnemonic Tableau of the Book of John. Thomas Anshelm *Rationarium Evangelistarum* (1505), sig. A4. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

THE MAP OF MORTALITIE.

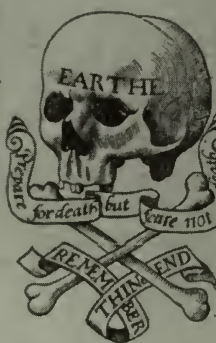


As by first Adam all doe die
So in me all are made alive.
Death's swallowed up in victory,
And I xternall life do giue.



Earth

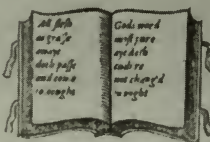
goes to
creades on
as to
shill to
upon
goes to
abouen on
shall from



as moulde to moulde.
glutering in gowle,
returme nere shoulde.
goe ere be woulde.
Consider may,
naked away.
be ft. ut and gay,
passe poore away.



Roude earth behold, as thou art we shall bee.
Against the graue, can no defence be made.
Dust will to dust, as thou art once were wee:
Worldes vaine glorie doth thus to not ing fade.
Man doth confume as water spilt on sande.
Like lightnings flash, his life is seene and gone:
Our part is plaide, your parris now in hand,
Death strikes vnwares, and striking spareth none.
Life is a debt to death, all men must die:
But when, where, how, the Lord alone doth knowe.
As death leaues thee, euen so vndoubtedlie
Iudgement shall find thee when last trump shall blowe.
Consider this o man whilft it is day,
Thine owne Christes death, for thee (if thou be his)
Vile worldes deceits, helles tormentes, heauen's ioy.
Provide to day in night no comfort is,
In season calme, with Naah build an arke:
With ioyfull lay vp store in plenties tyme:
How to be sau'd, let be thy chiefest care,
Returne to God, repent thee of thy crime.
That come death late, earlie, or when he list,
It be birth day of thine eternitie.
O righteous men, heu' thou the life in Christ:
Then sure the death of righteous shalke thou die.
Die to the world, when thou shalt farewell take,
That Christ may come and lue with thee in loue:
So in the world, when thou shalt farewell take
Thou must goe dwell with Christ in heauen aboue.
Youth well to lue, age well to die should care:
Life, for death in death for life prepare.



Since Adams fall did fill the world with sinne.
Whereby mans dayes (few) dayes of sorrow bin,
His life, no life, rather calamitie,
And worldes best pleasures, but meere vanitie
Such beautie, strength and wit, flowers fading bee,
Man made of dust, to dust must turne againe:
Sick all must die, by gods most iust decrees,
And death no torment is, but rest from paine:
Why should fraile flesh feare death, that ends all we
That salues all fores, and takes man from his foe?
His shape though ougly 'tis, he bringeth peace,
Stuns strife, ends cares, glues life, and with for ease
Men dying, sleepe, sleeping, from trauell rest,
To lue in ioy for euer with the blest.
Rather embrace, then feare to good a friend:
Yet with not for him, that in sinne doth end:
But greater sinne, to feare him sure it is,
That troubles end, and brings eternall blisse,
To faithfull soule, death's full of comfortes sweete,
That longeth with his Christ in Cloudes to meete.
In earth nought sweeter is to wise domes feale,
Then to prepare for peace, full passage hence,
For, wise man all his life should meditate
On death, that come hee should line, soone or late,
He is prepared to entertaine him so,
As Captiues do, redeeming friends from woe.
Lue well thou must, but canst not lue long. Euen
So lue, that death may leaue thee fit for heauen
And feare not death, pale, puglie though he be.
Thou art in thrall, he comes to set thee free.

FIG. 1.17. "The Map of Mortalitie" (London, c.1580). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

In response to this mixture of anxious vanity and superstition, even in the light of the Christian plan for redemption and eternal life, the death's head could function as both a monitory emblem and an encoded mnemonic; it was conveniently appropriated for retroactive memory aids and organizational mnemonics. Although the emblem depicts the decay of the human frame, it also signifies a message beyond its graphic presence. It is an invitation to strive for a pure conscience. In this sense, such an emblem called upon the individual to look to his innermost affairs and to set in order the contents of his internal castle. The "oeconomics" of putting in order, and settling, one's affairs involved appropriate displays of piety and charity and of being neither overwhelmed by the extent of our sin nor transfixed by the melancholy recognition of our transience and mortality.

Among the most popular of the Renaissance texts that addressed and supplied guidelines for the decorous management of one's will were handbooks following in the *ars moriendi* tradition, books of moral emblems, and tales of exemplary sayings and deeds—whether those of Christ, saints, martyrs, Stoics, or common men and women. Single-sheets depicting saints as well as pages illustrating stories from the Bible circulated in great numbers during the Renaissance. Broad­sides, owing to their ephemeral nature to begin with and the fragile condition of those that have survived, are not a frequent source of study for mnemonic mirrors of mortal temporality—and yet this condition in itself makes them exemplary for the study of what they themselves are. This is especially the case with pages that also reproduce mottoes, emblems, and poems concerning man's mortality. In general and in particular, literally and figuratively, "The Map of Mortalitie" is exceptionally exemplary (Fig. 1.17).

This emblematic broadsheet was intended to be displayed prominently in a home or place of public congregation. As such it fits John Willis's criteria for an item suitable to find a space within a room in one's memory:

For those things which we commonly hang vpon a wall, fasten thereunto, are here also like maner to be vsed . . . if it be a Proclamation or Title page of a booke, that it is pasted vnto the wall; if it be a new Pamphlet, that is fastened to the wall with nailes. (1621; Sigs. B2v–B3, pp. 18–19)

We begin reading this broadside with the geometric diagrams in the top corners, not only because we are accustomed to begin reading in the top left corner but also because our eyes are drawn initially to the cryptic diagram. Upon closer scrutiny we discover that, when taken together, these two diagrams in the top corners divulge the twofold mystery central both to human life and to the spiritual signification of the entire broadside: on the left, the mystical nature of the threefold nature of God, and on the right, the

transient nature of man. Using common textual conventions to read this sheet, let us begin with the diagram of the Trinity at the top left.

The frame contextualizes the meaning of the cryptic diagram with the following riddle: "The father god is made of none, created nor begot. / The Sonne of father is alone, not made create nor got. / The holie ghoste procedes from both / not made create nor got. trinitie in unitie." The words within the circles and lines urge us to read as follows: "the father is not the Sonne is not the holie ghoste is not the father / the father is God, the sonne is God, the holie ghoste is God." These characterizations of what is said not to be part of God's nature all flow in an endless circuit, symbolically never reaching a conclusion. The "negative attributes" reinforce the view that we are incapable of knowing the extent of God's being, let alone his essence and powers. The copulative statements, linking complement to subject (and here that subject is the supreme subject), terminate definitively in the central term, "God." All three statements are true, and none contradicts the other. This is an example of "trinitie in unitie" and also of unity in the Trinity.

The next step in our sequential reading of this sheet is to move to the other schematic diagram occupying the opposite corner (skipping over, for now, the representational drawing of Christ). The words inscribed on the outer frame again contextualize the meaning, which here is conveyed in interlocking verses: "In god dwelleth he, that in love doth dwell. and god in him doth dwell, that loveth well. / True love it is, the everlasting bliss. / Where god alone, in all his glorie is." Within the six-sided "love knot" (which was a popular amatory device appropriated here for a sacred purpose) we discover a poem that is to be read by beginning with the bottommost point and moving up. Scanning the second triangle for its content requires that you read upside down, beginning with the bottom right angle, only to end up where you began—in the same place, but somehow different for the experience of having moved through, and thought about, the text. The poem insinuates a trace of the previous trinitarian conceit and makes knots of the key words, even as the sentences are laid one over the other. With the rhyming words emphasized below, the complete verse reads: "A threefold knot this wisely *tide* against all / assaults fast will *abide* for god is love & / true love *guide* & ever is on true loves *side*." And the sequence of four rhymes within the second triad: "That brothers live in *unitie* & neighbors dw/ell in *amitie*, & man & wife doo well *agree* / both god and man reioice to *see*." Thus arranged in two triads, these monitory lines, when combined, constitute a mnemonic design for binding fast one's faith against all "assaults." The unity of the Trinity is asserted on the human plane in the form of men living united with mankind in general ("brothers"), amicably with those of one's local and immediate society ("neighbors"), and agreeably within one's own

household ("man & wife"). Such relations, when harmonious, simulate Heaven on earth.

Looking more deeply within this diagram to its centralmost place depicting circles within circles, the reader is cautioned about his mortality. Beginning at the mark of the cross, the admonitory doggerel placed within the outer circle reads: "eche hour prepare: Death strikes unaware." And within this circle are the numbers i through xii, suggesting a clock's face. The bottommost part of this inner circle is also marked with a cross, the symbol of the culmination of Christ's incarnation and the means by which his blood ransomed mankind. Thus the circular rhyme begins and ends with the cross. The structure of the message, combined with the monitory message, reinforces the notion of a universal and never-ending cycle: The proper point of our beginning and ending, in life as in death, is the three-personed God. Further, the theme and method of this point for contemplation are themselves reinforced by the top central section of our allegorical "Map of Mortalitie." The topography of our mortality is sketched out in a complementary way, through the illustration of Christ as a man, carrying the sacrificial lamb—which he both symbolizes and embodies through his incarnation, his crucifixion and death. The poem accompanying this emblem of Christ's sacrifice summarizes the chief moments in the teleological trajectory of the Christian view of human history: beginning with the first man's disobedience, continuing with the sacrifice of God as man, and culminating in Christ's redemption of the wage of our sin, thus paving the way for eternal life in glory. Thus the intertwining of cosmic and mortal history is expressed emblematically both in images and in verse:

As by first Adam all doe die
 So in me all are made alive.
 Death's swallowed up in victory,
 And I aeternall life do give.

As was the case with Anshelm's text in which the encoded mnemonic emblems were read in a sequence that formed the shape of a cross, the "Map of Mortalitie" invites the reader to do the same. Beginning first with the representational emblem of Christ's sacrifice and the explanatory verse, one looks next down to the central image of the page occupied by a death's head. This emblem is the broadside's focal place of precedence, just as it is in our lives (or, as the monitory emblem implies, as it should be if it is not already). The first banner reads: "Prepare for death but feare not death"; and the one beneath it, intertwined among the crossed bones, is a familiar rendering of the *memento mori* motto: "Remember thine end."

An open book is the next image found along the trajectory of the cross that inadvertently the reader traces with his eyes as he goes about the business of retrieving and decoding the involved emblems. Although Chapter 5 will take up in greater detail the diptych form used here to communicate a twofold message, for now it is sufficient to recognize only the compound theme addressed by the facing pages of this revelatory book: on the left, "All flesh is grasse awaye doth passe and come to nought"; and on the right, "Gods word most pure aye doth endure not chang'd in ought." On the left-hand side (the sinister, the dark, the temporal), we are admonished to recall the inevitability of our mortality, and on the right-hand side (the right, the light, and the eternal) we are reminded of the permanence of God's sacred and everlasting plan. The two parts are brought together in a terminal rhyme, just as man is brought together with God in and through his Word. Further, the poem harmonizes the Christian certainties of man's transience and God's perpetuity.

The final emblem in the vertical axis of the cross—and it is reminiscent of a memorial plaque suitable for a tomb or a church floor—appears, appropriately, at the lowest place on the page. A cartouche like this one is also appropriate for a map. The admonitory motto reads: "A shrovede to grave / men only have." The image circumscribed by this motto brings together two types of familiar images which had become mnemonic emblems of man's transience in the Renaissance: a shrouded corpse on a bier and the implements of grave making, the mattock and spade. (See, for example, Fig. P.R.1.)

The horizontal axis of the cross (which is the organizational mnemonic upon which these encoded mnemonics are situated) comes into view when we read and decipher a compound acrostic and rebus. The death's head is incorporated into the resulting poem, while at the same time highlighting its role as the turning point of what is signified through the entire "Map." The emblematic conceits and encoded mnemonics composing the image of a cross (which are to be read with respect to the enigmatic diagrams in the top corners) convey a route and some guideposts which every man can use in his journey through life toward his ultimate end. The moral implications are consistent with the Christian view of teleology and call for an anagogical reading (one that pertains to the state of the individual's soul).

Man's life is emblemized further through two images, the rooster and swan. These emblems admonish that one must be alert to his mortality so that he can arrange his life and make preparations for a pious final hour, whenever it chances to come. Beneath the rooster is the motto "Awake from sinne, / that sleepe therein"; and beneath the swan, "A Conscience pure, / sings to last howe."⁷¹ These bird emblems positioned at the beginning and ending of the horizontal axis are thus placed at the outermost borders of this

combined rebus-acrostic. The resulting poem contains eight lines, each of which must be read across the face of death. This repetition reinforces the redundancy of the theme as well as returns us, time and again, to the emblem of man's ultimate end. Further, if each verse is read as beginning with the motto beneath the rooster and ending with that beneath the swan, then this poem becomes something of a ballad with a refrain both at the beginning and end of the "verse." ("Awake from sinne, that sleepe therin. . . . A Conscience pure, singes to last howre.") But even without repeating these doggerel mottoes after each rhyming couplet of the text within the brackets, and instead reading them as an opening and closing to the entire poem, we obtain the following melancholy map of man's mortality:

Awake from sinne, that sleepe therein.
 Earth goes to EARTHE as moulde to moulde.
 Earth treades on EARTHE glittering in goulde,
 Earthe as to EARTHE retorne nere should.
 Earthe shall to EARTHE goe ere he would.
 Earthe vpon EARTHE Consider may,
 Earthe goes to EARTHE naked away.
 Earthe though on EARTHE be stout and gay,
 Earthe shall from EARTHE passe poore away.
 A Conscience pure, singes to last howre.

In the image of the death's head we see ourselves as if in a mystical and terrifyingly accurate mirror; we see our inevitable end emblematically depicted. This also shows up in Walter Raleigh's characterization of our being and our end (and his own) in the last pages of his prodigious *History of the World*: "It is therefore Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himselfe. . . . He holds a glasse before the eyes of the most beautifull, and makes them see therein, their deformities and rottennesse; and they acknowledge it."⁷²

The death's head, as a device signaling and as a token implying "death"—and more specifically, my own death to come—inspires introspection and perhaps melancholy; but, at the same time, for the faithful reader concealed within it is the seed of hope (see again Fig. P.R.2).

In sum, the entire "Map of Mortalitie" exemplifies an ingenious and compound use of memory images and as such reflects a fairly standard Renaissance view of one's place in a fallen world. Also, it presupposes a view of providence which, following Augustine, consists in memory, knowledge, and will.⁷³ This commonplace was expressed among other places in a 1540 translation of Vives: "We be framed and fashioned by these. iii. thinges, knowledge, wyt, and Memorie."⁷⁴ Walter Raleigh's gloss of this tripartite

distinction additionally can help us situate it in the seventeenth-century cultural context:

Memorie of the past: Knowledge of the present: and Care of the future: and wee ourselves account such a man for provident, as, remembering things past, and observing things present, can by judgment, and comparing the one with the other, provide for the future, and times succeeding. (Sig. B2)

John Donne also expounded on this threefold precept but placed special emphasis on memory—which, he argued, corresponded to goodness and “is the image of the Holy Ghost.”⁷⁵ Donne’s view of memory and his belief that “the art of salvation, is but the art of memory” (4:334) help us understand more completely how Elizabethan readers would have been receptive to and lived with broadsides like “The Map of Mortalitie.” Memory was understood to include judgment of the future as well as recollection of the past. For, as John Donne put it (and it is with his words that I would conclude this chapter and use them to set the stage for the next, somewhat more theoretical, step in our inquiry as with Milton “I now must change / Those Notes to Tragic”):

The wise man places all goodness in this faculty, the memory; properly nothing can fall into the memory, but that which is past, and yet he says, Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss. The end cannot yet be come, and yet we are bid to remember that. (4:529)

TWO



Imagining the Shadow of Death

Milton and Derrida

The admonition to remember what is to come (in particular one's passage from life to death, and then more generally some version of afterlife) requires that one project an image of oneself into the future. This image is the reverse of what was discussed at the opening of the previous chapter in terms of a trace, for this charge "to remember your end" involves a projection of a series of linked images of oneself in various states of decay, dissolution, and disintegration, and then—depending on one's religious upbringing coupled with the liberties and limits of one's individual, mortal imaginings—some transfigured image of oneself in the afterlife, whether Heaven, Hell, or some intermediate state. This is not to say that the general view at the time saw death as terminal or even liminal—far from it—death was central, but so much so that it defied one's steady gaze. As a result, during the early modern period, the process of calling to mind one's "end" lent itself to carefully scripted images and scenes as outlined in devotional and homiletic texts and practices. For example, one might recall conventional memory images of the fires of Hell that await the reprobate and of the unspeakable joys in the City of God (and what precise images accompany "unspeakable joys"?) that await the penitent Christian, like those described in Hoskins's coda to the "Golden Epistle" (in the first section of Chapter 1).

This kind of memory, concerning what is to come, is at once monitory (because its aim is to warn and to bring about a desired behavior) and retroactive (because it draws on allegorical images or sententious words encountered in the past).¹ This kind of memory, which may be termed projective memory, calls upon a visual and rhetorical vocabulary of ideality concerning both time and space: One relies on the future tense (to facilitate

being in more than one time frame) and on imaginary scenes and places that already have been encountered and explored in one's past. Thus projective memory depends on one's having access to techniques for framing an image of what (one desires or fears) may be. In effect, this is a product of "care" (in the senses of "to take care of" or "to have a care for" something, namely, one's self, one's being) and, as such, is an essential and characteristic part of the "being" that one knows oneself to be.² Further, once such an image is projected, one then is able to visit that place within one's mind's eye (as a locus in one's most intimate of memory theaters) and, as it were, to look back on one's present moment. Projective memory (which is at once monitory and retroactive, looking back forward and backward—and beyond) paves the way for our reconstructing the cultural psychology of using the memory arts in the seventeenth century.

It is the confluence of theological currents and mainstream poetic allegories in the seventeenth century that causes projective memory to declare itself most explicitly in the literature of the period. As I will argue in this chapter, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* takes projective memory as one of its key themes, no less than as a poetic principle governing its narrative structure. In this light his epic poem can be seen as a kind of Edifice of Memory designed to project and also to justify (and I use this term both in Milton's sense, meaning to prove, and in the more narrow Renaissance sense, meaning to fit or arrange exactly) images of human history past and future. But as will become apparent, the dramatic confrontations staged within this memory theater all are brought home to the reader in an image that Milton characterized as being both (and at once) a shape and no shape—Death.

In his effort to "assert Eternal Providence" Milton devised a complex epic poem. To relate his "advent'rous Song" of "Man's First Disobedience," he temporally rearranged the events and characters and spatially resituated the instruments associated with the origin and eventual overcoming of "Death . . . and all our woe."³ To accomplish his design he pioneered a metric practice that rehabilitated the midline pause, the caesura; this and other techniques helped him free the "Heroic Poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of Riming."⁴ And yet, for all of its complexity, adventurousness, and daring, the matter expressed in *Paradise Lost* both supports and gives new meaning to the late Renaissance view of human history as linear and inexorable and also subtly addresses its capacity to be represented at all.

The highlights of this teleological view of human history, so much a part of Milton's epic project, may be summarized as the movement from the creation of man and woman—who like "all th'Ethereal Powers / And Spirits" were made "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (III.99)—to the Fall, followed by the entrance of Death into the world and all our woe; God

the Son's incarnation, crucifixion, death, and resurrection; the second coming of "one Greater Man," the Day of Wrath and Judgment, the final victory over Death and Hell, and the establishment of the New Jerusalem. Death, as a process and as a character in the divine narrative, thus exists at personal, historical, and cosmic levels. The problem of how to represent and acknowledge all of these aspects of Death, while still trying to recognize salient differences, is one that Milton met head on.

This problem forms the basis of my inquiry into Milton's method for depicting the troublesome figure of Death—troublesome because Death remains a figure that stands over and against human life. It is also troublesome in another way, with respect to death's projection (or "throwiness") in the world, insofar as the image we have of death (in its "everydayness") conventionally is modeled on, and can only be patterned after, someone who is no longer living. In this way we can construct (or project)—and at the same time question the process of such a constructing (or projecting)—a provisional understanding of our being defined as "being-toward-death."⁵ In this sense, it is also troublesome philosophically (in that rhetorically it rules out of court the question of being as an essential aspect of mortal temporality) for Milton situates it firmly within an ontotheological perspective that involves the vision of a divine plan in which God the Son volunteers, freely, to redeem man from the eternal thralldom of Death: "Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop / Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd" (III.252–53).

Certainly this verbal quibble regarding Death's death, and its attending ontological paradox, appears in much of the poetry of the period (most notably Donne's "Holy Sonnet" that begins "Death be not proud" and ends "Death, thou shalt die"). And yet, owing to death's thematic centrality in Milton's epic project, his treatment of it goes beyond mere rhetorical *reductio* or witty paradox. This aspect of the problematic personification of Death in *Paradise Lost* has often been recognized by scholars and has been analyzed with instructive results in the light of iconography and theology.⁶ And yet this issue needs to be pressed further, so as to take into account the structural and epistemological assumptions underlying Milton's description of the figure of Death.⁷ Therefore this chapter will examine Milton's characterization of Death in the light of recent developments in the Western metaphysical tradition. More particularly, my point of departure is Jacques Derrida's attempt to extend the structuralist theory of language. The premise of this theory is stated succinctly in Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*: "in language there are only differences. Even more important: a difference generally implies positive terms between which the difference is set up; but in language there are only differences without positive terms."⁸

Derrida presumes that language use, far from being a mysterious or

mystical process, is based on a series of observable differences. In an interview on the practical application of deconstruction, he argued that no concept, in and of itself, is metaphysical; no concept, that is, can exist outside all the textual work in which it is inscribed.⁹ Because Milton's conception of human history and the divine drama is based on transcendental referents, we might expect it readily to be subject to Derrida's critique of the idealism inherent in such notions of teleology.¹⁰ But, as Herman Rapaport has argued, the relationship between the two is more complex and cannot be reduced to a deconstructive assault on *Paradise Lost*. Milton shares with Derrida the trait of working within a philosophical and metaphysical tradition, while attempting to lay siege to and affect that tradition by developing and using a radically new and adventurous style. I agree with Herman Rapaport that "one cannot simply take any English poet and turn the post-structuralist critical machine loose on him or her in good faith."¹¹ Milton's epic lends itself to Derridean principles of analysis because in the textual system of *Paradise Lost* Death functions in ways analogous to "différance" or, in the discourse of Derrida, as a kind of unrepresentable otherness which both constitutes and threatens the very possibility of conceptualization. And, as Derrida has acknowledged (at least in the context of a high-profile interview), "all my writing is on death."¹²

Derrida's notion of "différance" implies far more than if it were simply a neologism or a malapropism. Once "différance" has been marked by the silent and paradoxical intervention of the phoneme *a* (which in French does not change the pronunciation of "différance"), it sets into play an additional and different meaning with respect to the traditional or conventional one. This transformation of "différance" as a typological category into "différance," now as both a typological and a temporally marked category, is recognized by its differing from its own previous state and also as deferring any final and future determination of meaning. Thus the future state is situated with respect to its past (it therefore has, and always reflects, a history of prior signification); this future state is realized linguistically by the intervention of the phonemic sign *a* into the semantic field expressed by the word "différance." It is hardly accidental that Derrida selected the word "différance" as the term in which he would place a pivotal sign from which we might initiate a reevaluation of the production of language and meaning. Finally, according to structuralist terminology, "différance" is a fundamental principle used to explain the production of meaning, understood as the positing and recognition of differences.¹³

To indicate how a Derridean approach can provide insight into Milton's poetics, I will bring together several exemplary early modern articulations of the idea of Death. In each of these examples we discern that what is represented, finally, is something other than, and in addition to, the image

of Death itself. That which is represented retains the mark of a past element that has already let itself be hollowed out by the mark of its relation to a future element.¹⁴ In the case of Milton's rhetorical portrait of Death, according to Christian teleology, the future element that disfigures (or rather reconfigures) Death is its own implied future absence from the scene of signification. With this in mind, Milton's portrait of Death can be analyzed critically in the light of Derrida's suggestive statement: "Metaphor always carries its own death within itself."¹⁵ To explain the implications, I will relate Milton's poetic expression of Death as the "other shape" to the lively image of Death and its place in early printing. Since it is my intention to situate these several examples with respect to one another so that each can make evident about the others what none can declare about itself alone, I will refer periodically to Derrida's notion of "différence/différance"—as neither word nor concept but embodying a silent marker, "secret, and discreet, like a tomb . . . that (provided one knows how to decipher its legend) is not far from signalling the death of the king."¹⁶

PORTRAYING DEATH AS THE OTHER

Following the description of Sin, the first "formidable shape" guarding Hell's Gates, Milton describes "[t]he other shape":

Before the Gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd a Woman to the waist, and fair
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd
With mortal sting:

The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on. (II.648–73)

The explicit textual rationale for focusing on the "other shape" has been discussed by Joseph Summers: "It is the other which commands all of [Satan's] attention: it is not even 'real,' it has no certain shape, and yet it wears a crown and challenges Satan to combat."¹⁷ While Summers is on target in his conclusion, his analysis cannot be accepted without first attending more critically to the rhetorical movements of the passage. Let us

consider then the obvious rift between what we think we visualize Milton to be portraying and, more precisely, what we are given to read through the carefully crafted language of the passage. The rift that comes to presence in this passage creates a chasm between the image we form in our mind's eye and what we assimilate as purely linguistic matter. Thus it is from within this metaphorical gorge that we hear echoed the death knell for such an image at the moment we scan its description. After all, it is not a crown, we are told, but the "likeness of a Kingly Crown." What is more, this object, already supercharged with symbolic, ideological, and iconographic meanings, is not really on the head of Death; it is on "what seem'd his head." To look more closely at this other shape, then, is not only to rediscover, by degrees, the presence of death in the divine scheme but also to learn more about Milton's attitude toward what I have characterized as a problematic representation of the absolute other. Milton's characterization of Death as the "other shape" is the "other" not only when spoken of in relation to Sin guarding Hell's Gates, and not only when contrasted to Satan, but it is the "other" as well when compared to living men and women.

We can trace a long, well-documented history of ascribing to Death the characteristics of the alien, as the opposite of what is familiar. In central Europe from at least the fourteenth century on, for example, Death was "Der schwarze Mann."¹⁸ Perhaps this was because it recalled the bodies of those who died during the Plague; or perhaps it was related to the alien qualities of the blackamoor and the view of the infidel as an avatar or harbinger of malignant forces in the world (Fig. 2.1). Or, the explanation which seems most compelling for my present argument and which brings together those just suggested, perhaps owing to the dynamic nature of language formation in the early modern era, it results from the sliding from a word's pronunciation and others having linked meanings. In the sixteenth century the term for black people known as "Ethiopians, which we now caule moores," bears a striking similarity to the "Mors," the commonplace Latinized name for Death.¹⁹ Although we cannot know exactly how these terms would have been pronounced, and pronunciation differed from region to region, it is likely that, as with the terms "différence/différance," there was no vocal differentiation between "moors" and "mors"; similarly, this would have been the case with the term used to designate blackamoors in England at the end of the fifteenth century, "moriens," which is the same term used to refer to "the dying person" in *ars moriendi* treatises, "Moriens."²⁰

Whatever the folk etymology, in the Renaissance the figure of Death connoted the alien par excellence and stood for what might be termed man's ultimate "other." As such, Death is the "other" in general and in particular; it is simultaneously personified and yet distanced from the rhetorical trope of personification. And yet such an image nevertheless calls to mind some-



FIG. 2.1. Moor heralding Death. Guy Marchand, *Kalendrier des Bergers* (Paris, 1510), sig. L4v. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.



FIG. 2.2. Gisant. Abbey of Saint Vaast (fifteenth century).

thing that resembles what we understand all too well: not just the image of a human but the frame of a person who has been undone and overcome by death. In this sense it is both the image of the other and a gruesome reflection of each one of us after we have ceased to be. Thus it is a reminder of to what, and through what, state we all must pass.

A depiction of death like Milton's has the potential to be more unsettling than a tomb effigy showing a deceased person lying serenely in state, or even a traditional *transi* tomb (Fig. 2.2), perhaps because the portrait in Book II of *Paradise Lost* presents Death as being anything but still, quiet, and calm.²¹ This disjunction of stillness and movement marks almost all representations of Death in the Renaissance—as does the double standard that Death accompanies or is within each individual at all times and yet is characterized as the alien, as the other. For Milton especially, zones of tension like these are the focal matter for, and themselves are instrumental to, his poetic practice. His is a poetics of paradox, through which he supplies the reader a series of images and yet calls into question the very means by which these images are presented.²²

Milton's hyperbolic similes used to portray the other put into practice, and are a material trace of, the conventional operations of metaphor, but which, when applied to the body they would translate into another sense, are found wanting.²³ For all of its imputed ambiguity of shadow and substance, "[t]he other shape, / If shape it might be call'd" still conveys a figure that stands over and against life: Black, fierce, and terrible, this characterization of Death menacingly stands up to and, for now, opposes Satan, the archfiend. This rhetorical figure of that which defies figuration stands out as an extraordinary and, even for Milton, an extravagantly paradoxical moment, at once poetic and profoundly philosophical.

This intersection of poetry and philosophy sets the scene for inquiring how Milton's epic gives voice to a complex and yet a sustained and unitary discourse which aims to accomplish "[t]hings unattempted yet in Prose or Rhyme." After all, this poem seeks to justify the ways of God to men. Thus, in the process of enunciating its theme and asserting Eternal Providence, *Paradise Lost* sets in place and, to a certain extent, constitutes its own self-consistent rhetoric. Any time a rhetorical program defines metaphor (whether by explicit definition or, in Milton's case, as a poetic practice), not only is a philosophy of representation thus implied, but, as Derrida has argued, so is a conceptual network in which philosophy itself has been constituted.²⁴ The groundwork of such a philosophy comes into view in moments of self-consciously poetic tension like that exhibited through the construction of a character which is neither substance nor shadow, but one whose terrible power can be exercised despite its ontological indeterminacy.

Such a portrait of Death is disturbingly similar in kind, though different

in degree, to oxymorons that likewise play off the tension between light and dark—for example “darkness visible,” “ever-burning Sulphur unconsum’d,” and “veins of liquid fire” (I.64, 69, 701). This same impulse to use antithetical elements within a parallel structure indicates Milton’s plan for his philosophy of representation. It can be seen at work in other sections of *Paradise Lost* as well, especially in clusters of images that address the coming to knowledge of one’s implied future passing. Not only is this the fate of Adam and Eve, and (by extension) of all readers, but it is also the destiny of metaphor in *Paradise Lost*. What is more, Death itself is inscribed in this destiny as a monstrous entity (if entity it might be called) and is represented through similes whose images dematerialize even as they are put in language.

Although Death is accorded his traditional and identifying props of the “dreadful Dart,” a crown, and later his “Mace petrific” (X.274)—which is both a tool for building the highway to Earth and a symbol of his dominion—these conventional attributes are deliberately set at odds with the rest of Milton’s description of Death. Milton selected from among the available iconographic traditions, especially the earlier Renaissance theme of Death as King, which he conflated with ever-hungry Death, the destroyer. As Albert Labriola has assessed it, Milton’s rhetorical image of Death is a “personified description” of death which “incorporates the biblical Angel of Death and the skeleton in the Dance of Death and the Renaissance Triumphs of Death.”²⁵ Roland Mushat Frye argues that Holbein’s classic woodcuts of the Dance of Death are not Milton’s exclusive model, for there is no trace of organic imagery associated with Death in *Paradise Lost*.²⁶ While I concur, I would suggest additionally that Milton’s complicated allegorical image elicits the same sort of jarring reaction evoked by the animated cadavers in the Dance of Death; we can detect a sympathy between the two strategies for representing the unrepresentable. The fusion of potentially discordant iconographic traditions indicates the insufficiency, for Milton, of any one of them to suit his larger poetic and polemical design. For Milton, any simple understanding of the doctrine of accommodation (of representing things that defied mortal perception in metaphors and images within the scope of human understanding) was not a satisfactory solution to the problem of describing faithfully notions that implied an entire structure of belief—notions such as Death, God, and Grace.²⁷ Therefore, Milton’s solution to the problem posed by the limits of conventional iconography was to fuse into one allegorical body these various figural traditions. What then is the epistemological premise of such a portrait, a principal part of which is the denial of being able to portray the object of its scrutiny? How does the image of man’s mortal foe go beyond being a commonplace device and, as a result of the compounding of several figural traditions, become a lively

character capable of eroding the conventions of expression upon which its presence depends? We can move toward answering these related questions by turning to one of the earliest printed representations of the printing press. I turn to this powerfully self-reflexive image because it records a moment when the operations of the mechanical reproduction of images are depicted within the same frame as the image of man shown yielding to the figure of Death which, of course, is but an image of man after he has begun to decompose.

RECOGNIZING REPRESENTATION'S LIMITS

On a page from *La grāt danse macabre* (Fig. 2.3), the pressman is shown subjected to the process he strives to allegorize, namely death. On the left, a lively cadaver stops the arm of the compositor. In an adjoining room, crudely signaled by a column recessed from the rest of the printshop, another cadaver halts the bookbinder. These men are the subject of a printed image that is designed to circulate even as they, in the implied future moment of their own deaths, will cease to circulate in the world. Thus the men responsible for the printed image of Death arrest their own images in the process of carrying out their trades, even as they create multiple copies of the product of their collective ingenuity. The printed image of Death, seen in this light, does to the image of man what death does to mortals. Like death, this image is shown halting men, in midsentence and midgesture; the mottoes and verse-dialogue for each section of the picture collectively are evocative of Death in its function, because they manage to bring to a halt the range (and play) of possible meanings. Thus the very process of devising and executing such a *memento mori* emblem is recalled in man's figurative passage to death.

This illustration, which portrays one episode in man's journey through life, constitutes a single frame in a *danse macabre*; it is one of a series of similar vignettes of skeletons encountering men and women of all social stations. Because its message, in general, duplicates that of every other page in the volume, it stands in for, metonymically, any other episode. Like the other episodes in the book, the visit of the dead men to the printshop represents the journey of man *as* the progression to death. But unlike the other episodes, paradoxically, it represents Death's "progress" as a halting of the process that has made its depiction possible.

A similar example, showing the complex interplay of images of death and printing, occurs in the *Booke of Christian Prayers* (Fig. 2.4). (The form and function of this text will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.) In the top left border a compositor is summoned by a skeleton holding an hourglass aloft; the subscripted verse-motto reads: "Leave set-

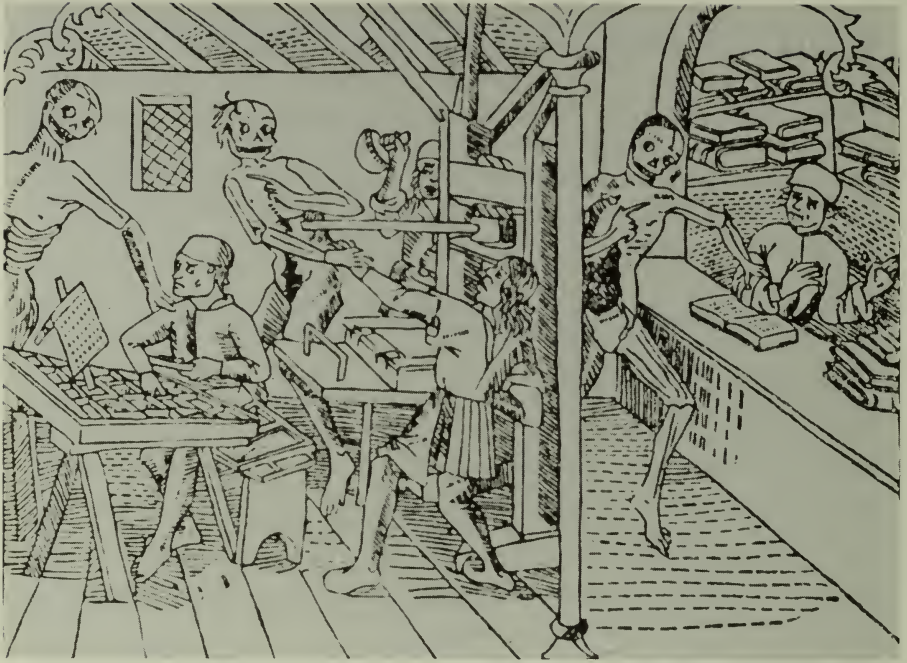


FIG. 2.3. Death visits the Printing House. *La grāt danse macabre* (Lyons, 1499).

ting thy page: spent is thine age." Beneath this, a caped skeleton interrupts the activities of both pressman and inker. Above them, stylized arrows point out Death's quarry; the motto reads: "Let printing stay: and come away." The skeleton on a tomb at the foot of the page, like a *transi* carving, shows what the corpse enclosed underneath it certainly will become. Above it, reminiscent of an abbey tomb inscription, is the motto both to this image and, more comprehensively, to the several emblems bordering the page: "We Printers wrote with wisdomes pen / She liues for aye, we dye as men."

Printing assured extensive repetitions of this already popular theme, and yet, unlike the earlier Dance of Death murals and relief paintings from which these macabre images were drawn,²⁸ the mechanical reproduction of words and pictures of Death assured a steady flow of identical copies—none of which merited special status over another. Despite its wide circulation, each printed image implied a range of meanings that went beyond that connoted by itself alone; the fact that it had innumerable copies, or doubles, undermined the idealized conception of a unique or authentic image having priority (and thus a kind of symbolic authority) over the others.

The invention of the woodcut struck at the root of the quality of authen-

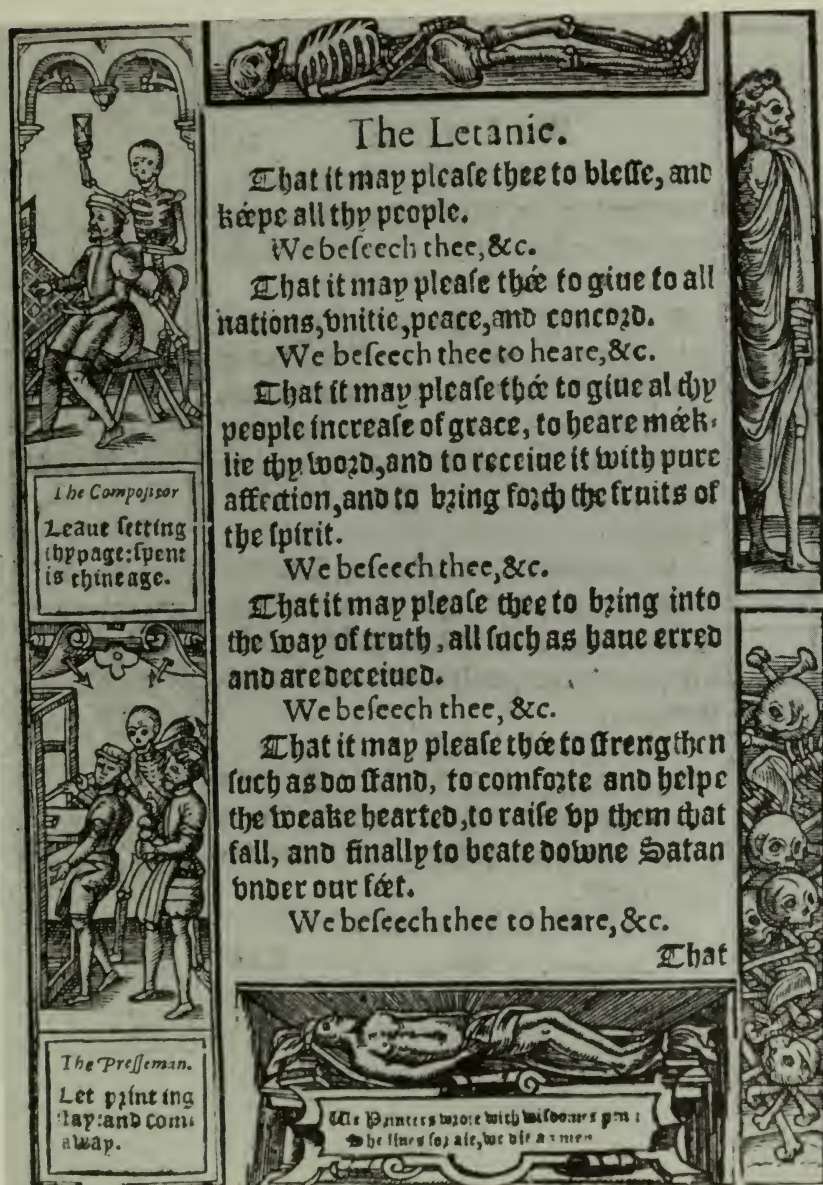


FIG. 2.4. Death visits the Printer. Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1608), sig. Ll4v. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

LE MIROIR DE LA VIE, ET DE LA MORT.



Mondains qui faictes cas des beautez d'un visage.
Sçachez que les aimer ce n'est pas estre Sage,
Puis que le temps enfin les doit faire pèrir,
Nous n'auons icy bas chose aucune assurée,
Tout change et nostre vie a si peu de durée,
Qu'en commençant a viure on commence a mourir.

FIG. 2.5. Mirror of Life and Death (Paris, seventeenth century). Courtesy Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

ticity even before its late flowering.²⁹ The printed copies of such a design—like one's own reflection—provide a glimpse of oneself both as self and as the other, as one's own mortal double. Seen in this way, as a mirror image of oneself, the printed image of death was a cogent and vivid reminder of one's inevitable future passing. During the seventeenth century, more explicit renderings of this theme showed men and women carrying their own deaths within them (Fig. 2.5). But the allegorical (which is to say the personified) image of Death, represented variously in the series of seemingly identical reverse images (or mirror images) of the print-block, attested to both the material and ideological effects of the printing apparatus—effects which are themselves mirrored in the process of our own passing away to death. The power of difference to engender unique meanings among the copies is canceled by virtue of the operations that regulate the means of its material production. So too did the material effects of death provide the basis for us to produce its image as a body undergoing decay.

It is precisely in these terms that the representation of death is discussed in one of the most widely circulated Dances of Death of the Renaissance, *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort* (1538), illustrated by Hans Holbein the Younger. The preface acknowledges the limitations of human artifice and declares that when depicting death, which no man can report from his own experience, one must decide upon a convention to designate something that, by its very nature, defies representation.³⁰ The preface continues by rationalizing that since death cannot be seen directly any representation of it depends on verbal descriptions concerning its trace, which takes the form of the marks it leaves on our bodies. Thus the ruined frame of a deceased person becomes our model; but, of course, the body in question cannot be one utterly given over to death, because then it would be “nothing.” Accordingly, Holbein depicted the face of death (which here is termed “la similitude de Mort”) as a body undergoing decay, a body still becoming nothing. Such figures were considered “simulachres . . . de mort.” I emphasize the terminology here because, as will become more clear in the concluding section, the problematic status of such representations in the early modern era bears a striking (though nascent) resemblance to contemporary ways of discursively resolving those same issues.

Holbein's *simulachres* reminded viewers that they are both subject to decay and the subject of this visual text on decay. This double message is conveyed through nightmarish visions of skeletons beating drums, wielding lances, and playing wind instruments—to name but three of the activities of Holbein's *simulachres*. Equally disturbing is the visual portrait of “Death as King,” where a lively corpse wears a crown, like that tauntingly alluded to by Milton in his rhetorical portrait of Death (Fig. 2.6). The crown, like the knight's lance, is a familiar symbol denoting one's station—

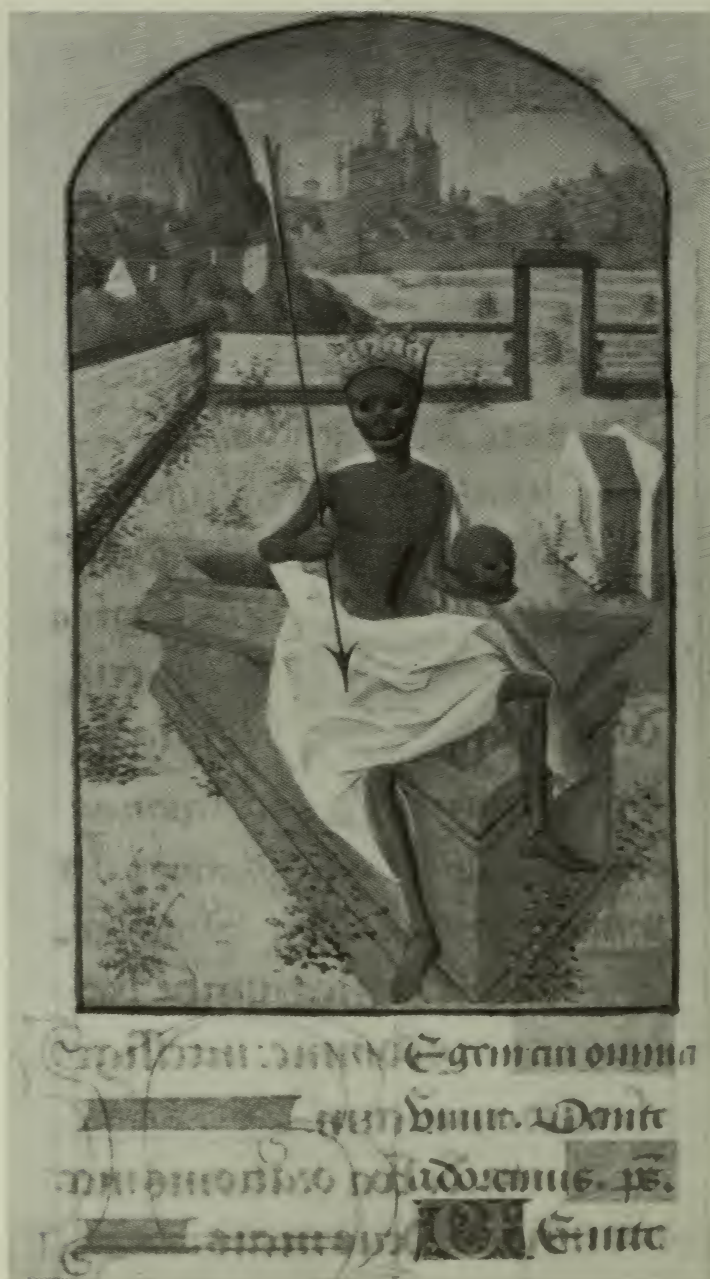


FIG. 2.6. Death wearing a crown. *Book of Hours* (Paris, fifteenth century). Courtesy of the photographic services of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

though a station which, in the face of Death, gives over its customary meaning.³¹ Paradoxically, these "simulachres . . . de mort" in the danse macabre, through which the artist presents a "concrete embodiment of what is really an abstraction," take on a symbolic life of their own.³²

This point—broadly conceived—is central to Milton's choice to bend and fuse a series of traditions to render an image of Death that differs from the iconological principles of the standard Dance of Death, and yet Milton's practice also implies that he declined breaking away from the figural traditions that show "crowned" death as man's ghastly mirror image. Undeniably, however, Milton's rhetorical portrait of Death remains a hyperbolic expression of man at his most prideful and as an insatiably greedy and ruthless sovereign. But there is a final irony implicit in the conventional depiction of Death mirroring men and women that would not have been lost on John Milton. Dances of Death reiterate that all are subject to death, whether of great or mean estate; thus Death's effacement of difference often involves a mirroring, or mocking, of people according to their particular stations (Fig. 2.7). This is especially poignant when the fall of people of high station is involved, as with the images launching the Dance of Death sequence in the borders of Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book. The terse and mocking summons beneath the images of Emperor and King respectively reinforce the theme that all are subject to death: "Of Monarch and Emperor I am the Conqueror" and "Keisar or king: I must thee bring." Clearly, though, differing positions are important, especially where depictions of Death's disregard for them are concerned. This tension is played out with caustic parody in the illustrations of Death and the process of printing, the jarring implications of which were heightened by sarcastic doggerel.

This way of reading, which necessitates a simultaneous crossing and merging of how we think about the relation of image and text, also exemplifies a method for apprehending emblematic conceits well within the range of everyday experience. As John Sparrow has observed, "The Renaissance spectator . . . found no difficulty, whether he was confronted by a building or by a picture, in looking, as it were, with one eye while he read with the other, and the artists of the time ministered to that double vision."³³ But when the thing being regarded is oblivion, or a shape "that shape had none, / Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb," how can this principle of double vision be applied? The answer lies in the early modern framing of projective memory; or, to put it grammatically, in the future anterior, in the tense that enables us to project ourselves into a moment yet to come, at a time when we can say that something (such as ourselves) already will have been.³⁴ The visual and ontological parallel to this grammatical construction is the image of the corpse, the ruin of a person's physical frame, which is taken to function as a currently visible, though fast decaying, remembrancer of what once was.

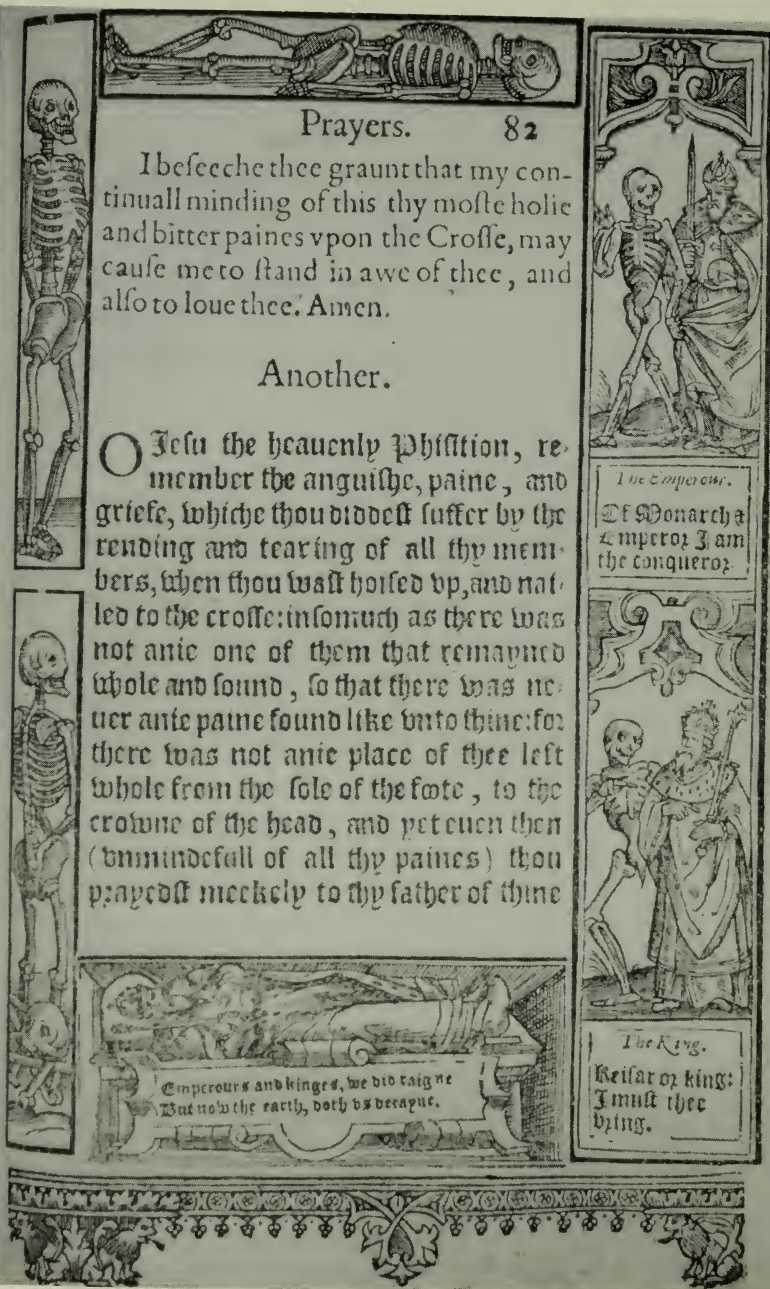


FIG. 2.7. Death visits the Emperor. Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1590), sig. Y2. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

The frisson elicited by such an image—like the yoking of words and images of perpetuity and transience, of the permanence of wisdom and the impermanence of men, of printing and stopping the presses—recalls Milton's special use of the Renaissance rhetorical practices associated with *concordia discors*.³⁵ We must bear in mind, however, that Milton's characterization of Death is more complex than the presentation of apparently opposing images of, or perspectives on, a given theme. Rosalie Colie has observed that during the Renaissance paradoxes typically generated self-referential activity—"operating at the limits of discourse, redirecting thoughtful attention to the faulty or limited structures of thought"—and that "paradoxes play back and forth across terminal and categorical boundaries."³⁶ Literary paradoxes therefore use, and at the same time call attention to, the conventions governing their composition. The observer is made aware of the content expressed and also the mechanisms of thought enabling him to fathom it.

This being the case, Dance of Death illustrations and verse-commentaries, as in Milton's complicated portrait of Death, call to mind a series of seemingly incompatible images which turn back on themselves and, through a paradoxical twist, turn the reader back on himself and his mortality. Thus Milton creates a single image to evoke the constitutive elements of an entire metaphysical scheme based on transgression, punishment, and eventual salvation. He focuses on a particular image, in this case Death, and describes it from a series of figural perspectives, so as to confound the imagination and make us recognize the incompleteness of mortal reason alone.

By confronting the reader simultaneously with the limits of mortality and representation, Milton projects a way for the reader to recognize the transhistorical and cosmic sweep of God's gaze and of his divine plan. In so doing Milton implicitly acknowledges his recognition of the limits of his own discourse. The subtext in both cases (of the "other shape" in *Paradise Lost* and the lively character of Death leading the Dance) is a kind of extended narrative concerning, and simultaneously a gloss on, the theme of *memento mori*. Further, Milton applies the language of paradox to translate traditional allegorical types into evanescent figures. He enhances the rhetorical impact of his paradoxical figure of Death by positioning a triplet of similes which engenders another kind of disorienting experience. In so doing, he supplies the reader with a way to become cognizant how language slips from the material to the conceptual, from the real to the allegorical, even as one scans them on the page. Milton accomplishes this by providing linguistic referents which at first glance appear to delimit the range of meanings in that they are clearly accommodated to mortal vision: "black . . . as Night, / Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell." Upon reflection, however, we ask ourselves by what standard we are to judge, without scale or degrees,

just how black is day's opposite, night; how fierce are the pagan avatars of vengeful justice; and how terrible exactly is the place of just and divinely ordained punishment, Hell? Far from being mere rhetorical flourishes, these three similes are also topical antitheses that correspond to the characteristics of the Son (light, gentle, and loving) who, as a man, will be overcome by death but ultimately will win the victory of victories over Death.

Milton's goal in this rhetorically convoluted puzzle is reminiscent of the Neoplatonist's ploy of activating a tension between clarity and obscurity by confronting the reader with an image that at first seems discernible but upon further viewing expresses hyperbolic extensions of each image.³⁷ By naming Night, the Furies, and Hell as that which Death is like, the reader is given a sense (or so he thinks) of what an aspect of Death is said to be like. Milton here subverts the biblical tradition which asserts that naming is an act of power that verbalizes (and thus realizes) the essence of the thing named. What Milton shows, in fact, is that to name the attributes of Death does not provide any substantial knowledge about the subject. Thus, in the case of Death, frustration awaits those who would believe that naming leads to knowledge and hence power over objects in the world. And yet this strategy is carried to the other extreme by Milton's withholding the name of "Death" for 121 lines after it is introduced in the text (II.666). Because of the allusions to the conventional tropes associated with the figure of Death, we are not in doubt as to the identity of the figure even though we may lack a nominal sign to situate it unequivocally in a single semantic field. But when Death finally is named within Milton's epic, the impact of its dramatic power is intensified by its context: Sin's recollection of Death's horrible, painful, and violent birth. To accentuate and augment the import of this primal linguistic moment associated with Death's origin, of Death's intrusive appearance on the world's stage, the name of the "other shape" is presented as an echo. The word (and name) of "Death" lingers and reverberates within the imaginary space of Sin's dismal refuge, even as it does within the theaters of our own minds:

... but he my inbred enemy
 Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal Dart
 Made to destroy: I fled and cri'd out "Death";
 Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd
 From all her Caves, and back resounded "Death." (II.785-89)

The rhetorical play of the echo here is represented as a sonic reflection which, lifeless in itself, refers back to an originary source of life (such as it is). So, too, the repetition of the very word whose name spells the implied future absence and cancellation of human life is the verbal equivalent to the image

of Death as a gruesome reflection of man after his own death. As such it calls to mind the mnemonic function of Milton's plan to construct Death as the embodiment (were it possible) of ontological otherness, as a trace of that which erases the trajectory of its own future movement. Thus, too, Death is elsewhere alluded to in visual terms that conjure images of a presence that is not a presence. Such rhetorical maneuvering and countermaneuvering again highlight Milton's preoccupation, where the portrait of Death is concerned, with what might be termed an ontology of absence. This can be seen more clearly, for example, when the epic turns its "Notes to Tragic" (IX.6), and Death is identified as the shadow of Sin. Sin, we will recall, was engendered by Satan's prideful thoughts of "bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King" (II.751–61). Sin sprang fully formed from Satan's head—an ironic allusion to the birth of Minerva, goddess of wisdom (as well as perverted image of the relation of the Son to God the Father). Death is the fruit of an incestuous union, and appropriately Misery is said to be Death's harbinger (IX.13). The implications of this cycle of echoes and simulations are both rich and subtle: Death is the shadow of Sin; Sin, in turn, results from the idea of (and thus is a shadow of) the archfiend's fatal, narcissistic pride: "Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing" (II.764). What, then, is the substantial thing for which all of these infernal shadows serve as featureless likenesses? The simple answer, of course, is man—in all his manifold and various forms of mortality. But it is something more as well, and less.

The more complex and more complete answer to this question comes into focus if we begin by referring to a popular text on the "art of dying well." The passage in question enables us to rethink and theorize the terms of our original inquiry concerning the epistemological premise underlying the coincidence of early printed images of death and Milton's problematic portrait of Death. Let us begin the next section then, the last in this chapter, with George Strode's exemplary early modern mapping of death's passage which relies on monitory, retroactive, and projective memory.

THE SEED OF DEATH AND METAPHOR'S END

[N]othing in all the world can inforce a man sooner to liue soberly, righteously, and godly . . . then the due consideration of his owne infirmities; the certaine knowledge of his mortality, and the often and continuall meditation and remembrance of his last gaspe, death, and dissolution, when as a man then becommeth no man.³⁸

Coming to this kind of "certaine knowledge" presumes a special kind of prospective memory which entails the paradoxical remembering of oneself as if one had ceased to be (when one "becommeth no man"). Therefore

Strode's comment bears comparison to Milton's situating within his epic those conditional metaphors and figurative oxymorons ("If shape . . . Or substance might be call'd that 'shadow seem'd, / For each seem'd either") which unravel from within the very notions of ontology upon which their referents depend. This is also the case with the Hell, the "Dungeon Horrible" which "eternal Justice had prepar'd" (I.70), described in terms of "Land that ever burn'd / With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire / And such appear'd in hue" (I.229-30), as well as with the otherwise unthinkable face of Chaos, "the Anarch old" with his "visage incompas'd" (II.989). Descriptions of this order suggest an anxiety about concepts like Death, Hell, and Anarchy—not because they are beyond the powers of description but because of the aesthetic liberties that their insistence on representation calls forth from within the delimiting structures of thought and language. Such descriptions invite a way of thinking about figuration and a philosophy of composition at once bound to teleological restrictions and yet overshooting the theological and aesthetic assumptions that otherwise govern the range of what is considered possible. But such a knowledge of the limits and liberties associated with language is tied inextricably to death. Both language and the figure of death are used in the service of a more encompassing scheme; both are prefigured in the future perfect, as fulfilling the function for which they were called into existence—and then are terminated.

The affinity between the symbolic exchange (mediated through language) and death is expressed in other ways in *Paradise Lost*. Perhaps the most obvious case is Satan's rhetoric of temptation that results in Eve's taking and eating the forbidden fruit which subsequently brings her to knowledge of death (IX.532-779). But even before the fatal words of the archfiend penetrate the consciousness of our original mother, the idea and the possibility of death already have verged perilously close to life—in terms of both syntax and the rhetorical trope of *topographia* (or, as Puttenham calls it, "counterfeit place"). We can discern this doubled sense of verging in Adam's remark about his inability to know what experience is implied by the word "death": "So near grows Death to Life, whate'er Death is / Some dreadful thing no doubt" (IV.425-26). Even before Adam has transgressed and come to a new kind of knowledge of death, it exists for him as an indistinct concept, but nonetheless as an indubitable one, revealed to him by heavenly powers. Within Milton's epic, and for us as well, Death remains inevitable although ontologically indistinct. To the immemorial quarrel regarding how death, as the termination and antithesis of life, can be said to have a mode of being, the answer quite simply is: through personification, through allegory. And yet, although Death may exist as an allegorical figure within a fictive construction like *Paradise Lost*, its real presence, for every reader, cannot be denied.

When we look closer at the tautological solution to this matter, we can discern that death (both as a character in Milton's epic and as an inescapable truth of the human condition) is denied the same ontological status as Adam, at least insofar as our original father's progeny can understand being. Nevertheless, Death is said to exercise a very real power. Raphael tells Adam that unless he and Eve govern their appetites and refrain from eating of the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil, they might be surprised by Sin "and her black attendant Death" because "Death is the penalty impos'd" (VII.544–47). While "black" may stand as the antithetical parallel to "holy light," the import of Death's status, although antithetical to Life and Light, is figured as always existing in relation to, and as a necessary part of rather than as opposed to, the operation of the divine scheme.

Such a figure of Death therefore is to be known by men and women as always in passage and embodying meaning—even as it enables the passing on and the passing away of that very meaning. This helps account for Milton's need both to represent Death and, paradoxically, to encode into this representation the seed that eventually will lead to its disintegration and passing away. This move is heralded at the moment when it is conceived and subsequently brought into being. In Christian theology, this finds a parallel expression in the doctrine of original sin; philosophically, such a procedure parallels (in both method and intent) what Derrida calls putting a term under erasure. This comparison can be pursued further by bringing face to face Milton's evanescent portrait of Death and Derrida's sentence, "Metaphor always carries its own death within itself."³⁹ As it applies to Milton, the process of death, contextualized as the wage of sin, is personified as a character whose aim is to de-personify all mortals and who, because of the operation of Eternal Providence, always carries within itself the implied future presence of its own overcoming, its own death.

But what does it mean to say that Milton's rhetorical portrait of Death takes into account its implied future passing? What are the implications of my having brought together Milton's image of Man's overcoming with the same theme graphically depicted in the Dance of Death? Milton's portrait of the "other shape," fashioned out of tropes, similes, and conditional metaphors, may be seen as a mirror to the Derridean notion of *différance*. I say mirror because Milton's idealist view of teleology and his elastic and transcendental notion of ontotheology are the reverse image of Derrida's materialist critique of such ideality. This is not to say that the one is the opposite of the other, but rather that the philosophical premises of each are complementary aspects of one another.

Milton's poetic practice argues against any simple, idealized notion of a closed system. In fact, as the final books show, death is the gate to life and only seems to connote ontological closure. Thus the rhetorical portrait of

Death functions in Milton's presentation of ontology much the same way *différance* functions in Derrida's materialist critique of ontology—to stimulate and to resist the longing for the security of a closed system. As Rapaport has argued, "Milton does not accept the logocentric concept of the book, since he incorporates important resistances within his texts to prevent the word from acceding to an idolatrous notion of the Word" (*Milton and the Postmodern*, p. 15). Through their special uses of poetic language Milton manages to destabilize conventional notions of ontotheology and Derrida achieves the same in philosophy. Milton and Derrida, each according to his own ends, stimulate a sense of anxiousness in the reader that is similar in kind, if different in degree. Milton addresses the threat death poses to the human imagination and the individual's effort to come to grips not only with such a concept but also with the prospect of his own imminent and eventual decay, of his own nonbeing—or as Strode phrased this paradoxical state of self-knowledge, when "a man . . . becommeth no man." Although Derrida would have us recognize that we can only think within the limits of our available discourses and can use only the terms and concepts appropriate to them, there remains a tacit uneasiness, a giddiness, which attends any sustained contemplation of the possibility that our received notions of a fixed order of relations are capable of being displaced and, further, that thereby we can project our own conceptual movement outside of the very structures of thought and language that make such movement possible.

Milton's rhetorical portrait of the "other shape" and Derrida's characterization of the other within language itself as *différance* mirror one other in another way as well. Both are fundamentally similar as attempts to conceptualize what defies the powers of straightforward conceptualization. Like Milton's portrait of Death, the projection of Derridean *différance* is that which ultimately is untranslatable, undefinable, and unthinkable. Gayle Ormiston has observed, "*différance* cannot be thought by any ontology, nor can it be elevated to a master-word, master-concept or master-key."⁴⁰ Further, Derrida's *différance* is a chain of textual configurations and substitutions which has no ontological closure. Milton's "other shape" (of Death) can be imagined not through ontological categories of difference but rather through his reformulated, doubled notion of ontotheology which allows for the phenomenal projection of Death receiving his death's wound (III.252–53). Derrida's play of *différance*, like Milton's trope of the shadow of Sin constituting the image Death, is rhetorically inscribed and enmeshed in a chain of other concepts, other words, other textual configurations and substitutes.⁴¹ The existential implications are that we can only imagine Death fully at the moment when we can realize our own moment of passing from life to death. It is our foreknowledge of this eventual disappearance of ourselves that makes the recognition of such a moment possible at all—a

moment made possible because of our having seen it in others, when we see our own future selves mirrored in another's present condition.

With such an understanding of *différance* we can see in a new light the chilling importance of Michael's words to Adam in Book XI, after Adam has been granted a projective glimpse of the panorama of his progeny's tragic history. Hoping that Cain's slaying of Abel is the extent of Death's mark on his descendants, as a trace that exhausts itself and then is extinguished, Adam inquires: "But have I now seen Death?" (XI.462). "Horrid to think," Adam exclaims, and then moving beyond mere intellection and projecting his consciousness into the realm of genuine existential anxiety: "how horrible to feel!" (XI.465). Michael, who is privy to God's plan for man's eventual redemption and therefore can express things about the "end of days" in terms of the future perfect, then recounts from a prescient perspective the inevitable extension of the ongoing chain of concepts and signifiers within which Death is enmeshed, with which Death is involved, and for which Death is responsible.

He explains that Death has many particular forms and effects, but it cannot be said to have a single and definable aspect that Adam can see, and about which he can declare once and for all that he has seen the extent of Death. Ultimately, Death's span, like that of man, can be evaluated only once his days are finished and all his deeds are done:

. . . Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim Cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at th'entrance than within.
Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,
By Fire, Flood, Famine, by Intemperance more
In Meats and Drinks, which on Earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know
What misery th'inabstinence of *Eve*
Shall bring on men. (XI.466–77)

This chain of differences, which resolves into the same end, belongs to Milton's characterization of Christian teleology, culminating with "the four last things": death, judgment, Heaven, and Hell; and this chain of events is forged by the metaphysics of "Eternal Providence."

And yet the doleful images of Death, thus exercising and validating his power—as well as the image of Death itself standing over and above the horrid scene of its triumph, shaking its deadly dart "but delay'd to strike" (XI.491–92)—are contextualized as the consequence of the absence of absti-

nence. Eve's transgression is phrased not as an action but as a refusal not to act. Thus, before Adam's gaze (and that of the reader's mind's eye) appears a *tableau vivant* of a memorable and pathetic house filled with "[n]umbers of all diseases'd, all maladies / of ghastly Spasm" (XI.480–81). The catalogue of the afflicted is meant to summon, through language, the forms assumed by Death as well as the forms of men and women transmogrified. In some measure, this was seen to be the case with the Dance of Death as well, where men and women of all social stations are summoned by Death to leave their stations and take their exits. Such then are the infinitely various faces of mortality, all of which lead to one and the same end, to one "grim Cave."

But the image does not stop here: The Cave of Death has a mysterious way out, at least for those who recognize and accept the "one greater man" who comes to vanquish death and who makes possible the glorious resurrection in life everlasting. Death then, in the end, although it overtakes and marks everyone, in the case of the faithful is understood as that which is ultimately deferred—because of a final trump. Like Derrida's notion of *différance*, Milton's figure of Death conditions and betrays the very delivery of its lineage. Given the terms of the divine plan within which Death is a fatal and necessary part, the mere presence of Milton's rhetorical portrait of Death implies its horrible origin and intimates its eventual overthrow.

Coincident with this symbolic production of the presence of Death are the linguistic effects, differences, and nominal concretions (Derrida's "chain of substitutes") which are produced and understood with respect to tropes that constitute a code ciphering out "Death." This observation points the way toward our spelling out the end of Milton's philosophy of representation in *Paradise Lost* and, by way of conclusion, sets up the critical bearings for the following chapter. Both goals can be realized by bringing into play Jean Baudrillard's premise that linguistic production, as part of a nexus of institutional, social, and structural exchanges, ultimately takes on the form of "ex-termination" and death.⁴² This parallels closely what I am arguing is a condition of Renaissance understandings and depictions of how best to represent mortal temporality, as was seen with the woodcut from *La grāt danse macabre* and with Milton's figuring of Death as an allegorical character being both, and at once, a shape and no shape. For once the formal code and combinatory rules of the Logos have been rhetorically opposed to what they produce (which, for Baudrillard, is a characteristic of modern—and it would not be groundless to assert as well "postmodern"—subjectivity), and we are left with nothing on which to ground ourselves, save a kind of theoretical violence; hence we can but speculate, even unto death. For the tropes that constitute a code ciphering out "Death"—the linguistic effects, differences, and nominal concretions—are themselves conditioned by the same rhetoric which, at best, can only defer the achievement of any final stability of the

subject in question. This is played out with steadily controlled ambiguity in Milton's presentation of the "other shape"; both in its tropological sense and its existential sense, death remains just beyond our reach. Death, as depicted in *Paradise Lost*—unlike its often simple presentation in commonplace similes, iconographic conventions, and theological aphorisms of the early modern period—is grounded in a radicalization of hypotheses concerning representation in general. At every turn of Milton's poem, the linguistic effects and chain of substitutes that signal death, in their delivery of the portrait of Death they are charged to convey, reveal themselves as evanescent terms of simulation. The case of "man" in the early modern period is more complicated still. For, according to the ontotheological presuppositions underlying Milton's poem, man's hope to regain his "original form" (understood as a divine image untainted by sin and death) is out of the question while he remains alive, in the world. At best, then, he can project this possibility, and speak of it, in the hypothetical (and hyper-real) terms of the future perfect. "Man," made in the image of God, is characterized as a "divine similitude" and can but imagine such a condition from where he stands, in the world as a "fallen being." His transformation, his recuperation (in some measure) of a state beyond which he now finds himself, is made possible because of another (higher) order of simulation, namely, God-made-flesh, as the incarnate Christ. The fundamental philosophical grounding of this self-reflexive relation of simulations implicit in the divine scheme is expressed concisely in Adam's questions to Michael, beginning with "Why is life giv'n / To be thus wrested from us?" (XI.502–3):

. . . Can thus
Th'Image of God in man created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debas't
Under inhumane pains? Why should not Man,
Retaining still Divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's Image sake exempt? (XI.507–14)

It is with such questions already anticipated that Milton, unlike the emblematisers who perpetuated the image of death as a lively cadaver, conveys the rhetorical portrait of Death through similes that are never permitted to verge too close to man. The "other shape," finally, is not a shadow or image of anything; we must recall that Milton tells us it "shadow seem'd." Insofar as it can cast no shadow of its own, any further simulations or projections thus cease with (and within) itself. And yet, secured within the circuit of Milton's use of similes—whether black, fierce, or terrible—and projected across the abyss of eternity, the "other shape . . . that shadow

seem'd" succeeds in mimicking our prospective vision of our incorruptible form after the moment of an implied future passing. In the end, metaphor, by virtue of the way it enables the passing on and passing away of meanings, like Milton's figure of Death, prefigures the "End of Things"; for metaphor—the rhetorical figure of translation, whether applied to bodies or words—like Man and like Death, always carries its own death within itself.

THREE



Embodying the Seed of Melancholy

Montaigne and Florio

Montaigne's relation to the book he spent the last decade of his life writing and refining can help us conceptualize the main epistemological issues associated with exemplary early modern representations of one's relation to death, and also (which is of extreme importance to my larger argument), more particularly, how one went about determining what he was capable of projecting—and could retain in mind as having been projected—beyond the limits of his own mortal temporality. We would miss a great deal of Montaigne's ingenuity if we dismissed as stoic posturing and if we considered merely as an exercise in humanist copiousness the following animadversions under the heading, "That to Philosophi[z]e, is to Learne how to Die":¹

It is the condition of your creation: death is a part of your selves: you flie from your selves. The being you enjoy is equally shared betweene life and death. The first day of your birth doth as wel addresse you to die, as to live.

Prima quae vitam dedit, hora, carpsit.

SEN. *Her. Fur.* chor. iii.

The first houre, that to men

Gave life, strait, cropt it then

Nascentes morimur, finisque ab origine pendet.

MANIL. *Ast.* iv.

As we are borne we die; the end

Doth of th 'originall depend.

All the time you live, you steale it from death: it is at her charge. The continuall worke of your life, is to contrive death; you are in death, during the time you continue in life: for, you are after death, when you are no longer

living. Or if you had rather have it so, you are dead after life: but during life, you are still dying: and death doth more rudely touch the dying, than the dead, and more lively and essentially. If you have profitted by life, you have also been fed thereby, depart satisfied.

Cur non ut plenus vitae conviva recedis?

LUCR. iii.982

Why like a full-fed guest,
Depart you not to rest? (I.19, p. 87)

The absorption into his *Essais* of numerous voices of authority and their counterclaims long has attracted the attention of careful scholars.² For example, in a characteristic passage from his essay "Of Books," Montaigne makes clear that the main issue was not how many quotations one can allege but the quality and appropriateness of those quotations extracted from venerated texts when applied to one's present purpose.

Let that which I borrow be survaied, and then tell me whether I have made good choice of ornaments, to beautifie and set foorth the invention, which ever comes from mee. For I make others to relate (not after mine owne fantasie, but as it best falleth out) what I cannot so well express, either through unskill of language, or want of judgement. I number not my borrowings, but I weigh them. And if I would have made their number prevaile, I would have had twice as many. They are all, or almost all of so famous and ancient names, that me thinks they sufficiently name themselves without mee. (II.10, p. 93)

And what was Montaigne's present purpose? Often it is interpreted, as he asserts in that same essay, to "endeavor not to make things knowne, but my selfe" (II.10, p. 93). It is by now a modern critical commonplace that Montaigne's practice of alleging authorities, seen as the reinscription of voices of "the other," contributed in large measure to his novel fashioning of the "self" in the early modern period.³ But this chapter is not intended as yet another study of "the self" in Montaigne or, more generally, of self-fashioning in the Renaissance. Instead, by way of pushing a step further my broader theoretical concerns, I propose to examine the seed that precedes, engenders, and kills it and to probe the essayist's gradual recognition of its fatal presence in his text, in his body, and in his being.

To discover the presence of this seed, and to question Montaigne's representation of just such a discovery by (and of) himself, I would have us look closer at a series of familiar assumptions about Montaigne's relation to his source materials by considering the categories of those assumptions in a matrix of corresponding relations (Table). Doing so will enable us to remark on some yet undetected, and quite curious, connections between and among

Montaigne's Inheritance	→ Sententiae	Château Montaigne	Kidney stones
Related headings	→ Text	Context	Sex
Categories of "appendicules et adminicules" (III.13, p. 376)	→ Thesauriser [to hoard]	Bastir [to thrive & to build]	Regner [to reign & govern]
Domain for Montaigne	→ Linguistic	Domestic	Private
Site/cite at chateau	→ Books/his book	Character/his essays	Home & leisure/"moi"
Commonplace headings (Meres, <i>Palladis Tamia</i>)	→ Sentences	Similitudes	Examples
Rhetorical strategies (Erasmus, <i>De Copia</i>)	→ Sententiae	Collatio/similitudo	Exempla
Corresponding "faculty"	→ Reason	Imagination	Memory
Domain of knowledge	→ Philosophy	Poetry	History
Reduce to its most fundamental principle	→ Precepts	Conceits (concepts)	Examples
Its corresponding role and means	→ Dynamics and consequences of the mind's operations	Derives precepts from history's examples and examples from philosophy's precepts	Storage and arrangement of examples for future
Illustrations of the mneme from Florio's <i>Essays</i>	→ "memorie alone, of all other things, compriseth not only Philosophy, but the use of our whole life, and all the Sciences" (II.17, p. 377)	Socrates' sayings are "inductions & similitudes drawn from the most vulgar and known actions of men. . . . Men are puffed up with wind . . . as Baloons" (III.12, p. 290)	"The third, and in my judgement, most excellent man is Epaminondas" (II.36, p. 488)

memory, death, and writing in the early modern period. The chief thematic headings under which my inquiry is carried out are also those things which Montaigne says he inherited respectively from his culture, from his ancestors, and from his father, namely (1) his language, literature, and selected *sententiae*; (2) his chateau, including the tower that contained the library where he composed his essays—an endeavor resulting in the composition of his “character” in a way which, I argue, differs from conventional humanist interpretations of this process; and (3) his kidney stones.

The conclusion toward which my analysis points was suggested by Walter Benjamin’s analogy, that “allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things.”⁴ Accordingly, my critical understanding of *sententiae* (wise words culled from earlier texts) and *exempla* (recorded deeds worthy of memory, and of being digested into one’s commonplace book and daily life) is grounded in the compound comparison: What allegories are to the realm of thought, these fundamental units of Montaigne’s discourse of “the self” are to the realm of language, what ruins are to the realm of things.

The initial terms of my approach become clear when we consider why ruins are an apt point of comparison for scrutinizing *sententiae*. Many popular mottoes and sententious words from the classical world were known to men and women in the Renaissance through inscriptions on monuments and tombs. Preserved as partial and extant fragments, then, *sententiae* like *exempla* conveyed information which, it was hoped, would endure despite the ravages of time.⁵ However, because these etched sentences often survived only as so much rubble and as so many fragile parchment rolls, in general they were seen as tokens of man’s vanity (intimating the folly of the desire to endure) rather than serving their more specific capacity as authentic records of the past.⁶ When brought together in a central place—whether actual ruins collected and catalogued in a museum or those represented emblematically in a *vanitas* painting—they are like so many anthologized *sententiae* culled from diverse sources and books. In their new locations ruins, like abstracted *sententiae* and *exempla*, invariably are accorded a context different from their original setting. They can stand as a trace or memorial of something that has passed from the world—and from recorded history.

The intellectual play associated with developing *sententiae* and *exempla* that have been unhooked from their textual moorings evidently appealed to Montaigne. As M. A. Screech has observed, “a special feature of Montaigne’s style and meaning is his refusal (normally) to state his sources and authorities. This is quite deliberate: he likes the ideas to be weighed *in vacuo*.”⁷ And, by comparison, the same may be said of Robert Burton in his learned pastiche on early modern psychology, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (published in its first form in 1621). Like Montaigne, Burton spent the last decades of his life writing and revising his magnum opus—a process each accorded

therapeutic value.⁸ Both writers claimed they sought through their writing a kind of mental equilibrium; Burton says he sought to ease his mind by writing because he had, metaphorically speaking, "a kind of imposthume in my head, which I was very desirous to be unladen of, & and could imagine no fitter evacuation than" writing.⁹ Montaigne, at the time when he decided to resolve his studies and live his remaining years in tranquility, recorded that his imagination, like a "skittish and loose-broken jade," took "a hundred times more . . . liberties unto himselfe,"

and begets in me so many extravagant *Chimeraes*, and so fantastick monsters, so orderlesse, and without any reason, one huddling upon an other, that at leasure to view the foolishnesse and monstrous strangenesse of them, I have begun to keepe a register of them, hoping, if I live, one day to make him ashamed, and blush at himselfe. (I.8, p. 44)

Parallel to this fantastic and monstrous growth are the rather more substantial and poignantly real kidney stones that took shape over the years since he began composing—and, as it were, building—his essays (a condition upon which he dwelled most conspicuously in the chapters concluding Books II and III, and upon which I will dwell in the second and third sections of this present chapter).

The growth thus characterized by Montaigne, and which his essays describe, I contend is less an index to spiritual progression than it is a sustained and ingenious reflection on the techniques available to him to represent the necessary conditions of his mortality.¹⁰ This way of characterizing his text is decidedly different from the view that it is a stoicized Epicurean meditation on the vanity of worldly existence which becomes progressively more resolute as the essayist grows older and writes more. The unruly chimeras, like his stones, are represented by Montaigne as coming to presence at their own pace, and yet, like the essayist's use of *sententiae* and *exempla*, they begin to take on a kind of parasitic life of their own within the host's body. Thus, if we are to maintain the interpretation that his essays are an emerging self-portrait done "to the life" (II.37, p. 520),¹¹ then we need to consider as well that the picture coming into focus as we read is a portrait of passage, in the face of death.¹² My assessment accords with the by now familiar layered interpretation of a "portrait of passage," only insofar as the image of the "character" portrayed can be read as an allegory of death sublating life.¹³ The resulting text, then, is like an afterimage of the author, a reflection of a subject in the process of passing away even as he writes (and revises what he writes) about that passage. His is a subject conveyed over time, piecemeal, even as that very subject slowly slips away from view—for in the recognition of the conditions occasioning such a slippage by virtue of textual generation

and proliferation, the author discovers the truth of his being as multiple and at once ontologically irrecoverable and yet allegorically salvageable.¹⁴

May it please the gentle reader, to suffer this one part of Essay to run on, and this third straine or addition of the rest of my pictures peeces. . . . My booke is alwaies one: except that according as the Printer goes about to renew it, that the buyers depart not altogether empty-handed; I give my selfe law to adde thereto (as it is but uncoherent checky, or ill joined in-laid-work) some supernumerall embleme. . . . I am growne aged by a number of years since my first publications, which were in a thousand five hundred and foure score. But I doubt whether I be encreased one inch in wisdom. My selfe now, and myselfe anon, are indeed two; but when better, in good sooth I cannot tell. (III.9, pp. 205–6)

How then to depict the sense of loss and also what is gained through the extension of this intimate textual exercise?

The answer resides in Montaigne's attempts to digest and dispose exempla and sententiae—those commonplace rhetorical devices which are to the realm of language and the body of Montaigne's text what his kidney stones are to his material body. Such is the grounding, the groundwork, *la matière*, of the essays; such is the subject of Montaigne's essays in a doubled sense.¹⁵ Therefore I would have us consider more closely the double direction of this movement by exploring the extent to which his stones found their way into the body of Montaigne's text, just as sententiae and exempla, which typographically make up the bulk of his essays,¹⁶ are absorbed, ingested, and made a part of the essayist's "being." His stones, like sententiae in general, and like *memento mori* tokens, bespeak the former presence of a once grander form than what now appears before one's eye. As such they signify within his body, being, and text a kind of furtive growth that reflects and heralds the passing away of "the self" so often celebrated by readers of Montaigne.¹⁷ This growth—understood both as a generative process and as a disease—is legible to anyone who takes the book in hand, the essayist included. And, insofar as Montaigne's condition is said to reflect that of mankind in general, we can catch a glimpse of ourselves not only in what he says but also in the metaphoric process used to craft that mirror of the self. But, reader, be warned: The emblematic mirror, like the growth, is "mortal" in a compound sense; it is fatal, and it is typical—and it is already within us even before we take up his book.

THE SITE OF WRITING

An essential aspect of education and rhetorical training in the Renaissance was to maintain a digest of one's reading and studies.¹⁸ In practice this could

range from marking selected passages in exemplary texts like Seneca's *Epistles* or Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* to copying out those memorable sentences or notable deeds into one's enchiridion or commonplace notebook. Print technology made available neatly arranged anthologies and thesauri of commonplaces—whether notable passages or handy phrases culled from classical texts. Somewhere in between the private and the printed systems of collecting and preserving “sentences worthy of Memory” was John Foxe's *Pandectae locorum communium* [Comprehensive collection of commonplaces] (1572), a fill-in-the-blank workbook with printed topical headings and a few typical examples to suggest a pattern for the book's owner to follow.¹⁹ Like other introductions to such textual repositories arranged by commonplace headings and which included an exhaustive index, Foxe's cautions against relying exclusively on the entries in the collection. The owners of such books were urged to read the original from which the passage is excerpted and then to judge for themselves what is, or should be deemed, worthy of recording, preserving, and transmitting.

This same caveat informs Montaigne's handling of citations and quotations as well. Exemplary in this regard is his metacritical use of the maxim *Homo sum, humani a me nihil alienum puto* (“I am a man, I consider nothing human foreign to me”). This sentence from Terence was adapted by Montaigne and used in “Of Drunkenness” (II.2). It appears in between lines from Lucretius and Virgil that support and, owing to its original context, also complicate the contention that a sage, or hero, after all is mortal and therefore vulnerable. Wisdom does not overcome our natural limitations. This same sentence, without being linked to its source in Terence's *Heauton Timorumenos* [The self-tormentor], also shows up as one of the fifty-odd moral sentences inscribed on the beams of Montaigne's library.²⁰ Hugo Friedrich, among others, has explained that the *sententiae* on the beams “outline, in the manner of mnemonics, the skeptical main themes of the first two books of the *Essais*, in which a part of them is repeated.”²¹

It must be pointed out and commented on critically that the very structure of this room constituted a material “enchiridion”; Montaigne composed his *Essais* from within the space of a commonplace book writ large. The visible structure of the library indicates that Montaigne, quite literally, “elevated” *sententiae* and physically “raised” commonplaces above the books from which they had been taken. Surrounded by mnemonic aids that inspired his inventions, Montaigne wrote as if from within an anthology of at least fifty of his favorite *sententiae*. Further, this room was filled with his favored books, and it was situated so that he could survey his entire household and grounds. He describes the virtues of this room in ways that are strikingly similar to the construction of an artificial memory system. Montaigne writes:

At home I betake me somewhat the oftner to my library, whence all at once I command and survey all my housholde; It is seated in the chief entrie of my house, thence I behold me my garden, my base court, my yard, and looke even into most of my house. (III.3, p. 49)

And Quintilian observed:

The first thought is placed, as it were in the forecourt; the second, let us say, in the living-room; the remainder are placed in due order all round the impluvium . . . all these places are visited in turn and the various deposits are demanded from their custodians, as the sight of each recalls the respective details. (*Inst. Or.* 11.2.20)

It was from the imaginary retracing of one's steps through a familiar house that one could deposit and later retrieve bits of information.²² And it was precisely from such a room that Montaigne ordered the apparent disorder of his thoughts and transformed them into the viable substance of his essays. It is within this special room, he tells us, that his writing takes place in connection with his random perusing of books.

There without order, without method, and by peece-meales I turne over and ransacke, now one booke and now another. Sometimes I muse and rave; and walking up and downe I endight and enregister these my humours, these my conceits. (III.3, p. 49)

Then, as if taking the reader with him as he ambles in his mind's eye from room to room, he describes what is to be seen—and what is to be remembered. The point of origin for this exercise, which is also the center of his memory palace, is his library.²³

It is placed on the third storie of a tower. The lowermost is my Chapell: the second is a chamber with other lodgings, where I often lie, because I would be alone. . . . My thoughts are prone to sleepe, if I sit long. My minde goes not alone as if [legges] did moove it. Those that study without bookes, are all in the same case. The forme of it is round, and hath no flat side, but what serveth for my table and chaire: In which bending or circling manner, at one looke it offreth me the full sight of all my books, set round about upon shelves or desks, five rancks one upon another. (III.3, p. 49)

Because of the physical design of this room, as well as the disposition of his books within it, he was able to take in all of his volumes at a single glance; and, perhaps in gazing upon one of the "five rancks" of his books

he would remember some anecdote or tale that would inspire him to rise, walk to the shelf, and "turne over and ransacke, now one booke and now another." This brings to mind a further coincidence of architectural and mnemonic design, one perhaps not lost on Montaigne: His bookshelves correspond in number and aim to the decorum advocated by classical memory arts.²⁴ And so, whether glancing at his books or at the inscribed beams overhead, or ambling within his top-floor library or within the Library of Memory in his mind, Montaigne was put in mind of choice *sententiae* and *exempla*, which functioned like spurs to his further invention and composition.

The peculiar design of this room, while obviously quite personal with respect to the particular *sententiae* decorating it, is symptomatic of rather than eccentric to the emblematic habit of mind during the late sixteenth century. The most outstanding example in England is the Great Hall of *sententiae* built by Nicholas Bacon.²⁵ And there are examples of other stately homes of the period decorated with *sententiae* as well as with emblems and *imprese* so that a visitor to such a room felt as if he had entered an emblem book.²⁶ Such a design for the arrangement of *sententiae* (with or without accompanying emblems) is consonant with the decorum of artificial memory schemes of the period.²⁷ The structure of Montaigne's essays, and at times the theme upon which he expounds, reflects a common sixteenth-century association of *inventio* (from classical rhetoric) with the notion of a storehouse or room (from the classical arts of memory). Put simply, the arrangement of *sententiae* in the essays corresponded to the placement of images in the arts of memory. Even though John Florio probably never visited Montaigne's Library of Memory, his translation alludes to and reproduces just such a view of *sententiae*. For example, in the opening section of Book II, as elsewhere, Florio highlights the role of the *sententia* in the essays by marking them with a change in typeface and spacing (which is not the case in Montaigne's original) and by translating the fragment, in this case from Cicero. Florio recognized and respected the sense of place and topic which contributed to the emblematic quality of Montaigne's essays, and, in the third edition, he called further attention to the mnemonic qualities of the text by including a frontispiece depicting a fantastic inner courtyard glimpsed from an entry gate of a vast palace complex (Fig. 3.1). While obviously playing off the popular architectural trope common to many frontispieces of the period,²⁸ Florio takes it a step further in the direction of the art of memory. As such it furnished a ready-made image for demonstrating that the structure erected by one man's mind may serve as a pattern for others viewing and organizing that compilation. In the explanatory poem "To the Beholder," the essays' topics are explicitly compared to rooms and places within a memory palace.



FIG. 3.1. Frontispiece to Montaigne's *Essays* (London, 1632). Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

When first this portlike *Frontispeece* was wrought,
 To raise a *Pile* compleat, it was our thought,
 Whose *Roomes* and *Galleries* should have been trim'd
 With *Emblemes*, and with *Pictures* fairly lim'd,
 And drawne from those neat *Peeces*, which do lurke
 Within the *Closets* of this *Authors* worke:
 So placing them, and them contriving so,
 That ev'ry *Reader* (passing to and fro)
 By casting thereupon a glauncing eye,
 Might in that *Model* or *Epitome*,
 (E'en at the first *Aspect*) inform'd have beene,
 Of ev'ry *Raritie* contain'd within.
 But walking through that *Plaace* of *Invention*,²⁹
 (The better to accomplish our intention)
 We found unlookt for, scattered here and there,
 Such *Profits*, and such pleasures, ev'ry where,
 In such *Variety*, that, to but name
 Each one, would make a *Volume* of the same.
 For, in those *Angles*, and among those *Leaves*
 Whereon the rash *Beholders* eye perceives
 No shewes or promised, of such choice things,
 A diligent unfoldor of them brings
 Concealed *Fruits* to light: Ev'n thus did we
 In such abundance, that they prove to bee
 Beyond a briefe *expression*, and have stop't
 Our purpose in presenting what wee hop'd.
 Instead of *Emblemes* therefore, to explaine
 The scope of this great *Volume*, we are faine
 To fixe the *Authors Title*, on the *Gate*,
 Annexed to his *Name*; presuming that
 Will give this following *Treatise* much more praise
 Then all the *Topiques* which our skill can raise.

Pray passe along, and stare no more on that
 Which is the *Picture* of *you know not what*
 Yet, if it please you *Spell it*, And if than
 You understand not, *Give them roome that can*.

The person acquainted with the idea of "Places of Invention," typical of an artificial memory system, will have no trouble deciphering Florio's elaborate conceit. The reader whose wit has comprehended and reproduced for himself such a paradigm is likely to carry it with him and refer back to it as he reads the essays. If he wants to remember their orderly arrangement or even to recall parts of them, he need only recollect the various topics and assign them a place in his own memory palace, perhaps using as his point of departure the striking frontispiece. Consistent with this design, Florio

made Montaigne's topical verse citations all the more memorable (and easy to memorize) by translating them into English rhymed couplets. And further, as already mentioned, he highlighted some of the "profits" and "pleasures" of Montaigne's text by arranging the quotations as islands in a sea of prose. This technique recalls the fundamental principle of the memory arts discussed in classical rhetoric.

The artificial memory includes backgrounds and images. By backgrounds I mean such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory. . . . [T]hose who have learned mnemonics can set in backgrounds what they have heard, and from these backgrounds deliver it by memory. For the backgrounds are very much like wax tablets or papyrus, the images like the letters, the arrangement and disposition of the images like the script, and the delivery is like the reading. (*Ad Her.* 3.16.29–17.30, pp. 207–9)

In the end, Florio's image of the memory palace is both an allegorical and a memorably graphic entryway into the *Essayes*—and one entirely consistent with Montaigne's scene of, and original design for, his *essais*, for his "tryings or samplings" of the self.

Indeed, just as the *sententiae* were placeholders in Montaigne's text, the imaginary places and rooms constituting the great palace of the mind were repositories, storehouses, and treasuries of past images, words, and deeds.³⁰ In this sense, memory functions for Montaigne as both a dominant theme and writing practice. He confessed that he was "a man of no remembering . . . who for want of memorie" consulted books in order to refine "the force and beautie of" his own "Discourses" (II.10, p. 93). In the course of his setting about to compile his essays he managed to fashion an "artificial memory" to supplement his self-proclaimed deficient "natural memory," in much the same way commonplace books were used by orators and jurists to store information for later use.³¹ Accordingly, Montaigne drew from Plutarch and Seneca, as the Danaids drew water: "uncessantly filling, and as fast emptying: some thing whereof I fasten to this paper, but to myselfe nothing at all" (I.25, p. 149). And yet his recognition of the limitations of the commonplace-book method of developing themes separates his use of earlier texts from those pedants he criticizes.

Is not that which I doe in the greatest part of this composition, all one and selfe same thing? I am ever heere and there picking and culling, from this and that booke, the sentences that please me, not to keepe them (for I have no store-house to reserve them in) but to transport them into this: where, to say truth, they are no more mine, than in their first place. (I.24, p. 138)

And yet, although he claims not to retain the words of others, nevertheless they remain a vital part of his project. The numerous citations and sententiae mark the collected essays as the "store-house" of his inventions and reading. On the one hand, of course, the mere collecting of sententiae and exempla (whether in one's own "table" or by using a printed anthology to supplement and support "natural memory") did not lead to the furthering of true knowledge. Montaigne ironically reiterated this commonplace by reaching into his own storehouse of memory to relate a sentence by Cicero, only to demonstrate that he had access to the names of things but not their substance and that this recognition is the extent of what he knows despite his reading:

"Assuredly memorie alone, of all other things, compriseth not onely Philosophy, but the use of our whole life, and all the sciences." Memorie is the receptacle and case of knowledge. Mine being so weake, I have no great cause to complaine if I know but little. I know the names of Arts in Generall, and what they treat of, but nothing further. . . . The authours, the place, the words, and other circumstances, I sodainly forget. (II.17, pp. 377–78)

Perhaps he protests too much for us to take him at face value;³² and yet it is his deficient memory, he argues, which keeps him from being deceitful toward others—and himself. His essay "Of Lyers" begins with a proclamation: "There is no man living, whom it may lesse beseeme to speake of memorie, than my self, for to say truth, I have none at all: and am fully perswaded that no mans can be so weake and forgetfull as mine" (I.9, p. 44); and the essay then goes on to explain that his daily discourse is the more brief because "the Magazine of Memorie is peradventure more stored with matter, than is the store-house of Inventions" (I.9, p. 45). Further, as might be expected of a writer fond of juxtaposing divergent points of view through sententiae, he again applied his conversational voice in his essay "Of Books" to denounce what his use of sententiae implied about the basis of his judgment, and therefore about his knowledge more generally.

And it were necessarie they [our souls] should (being yet in the body) remember the said knowledge (as *Plato* said) that what we learn't, was but a new remembering of that which we had knowne before: A thing that any man may by experience maintaine to be false and erronious. (II.12, p. 259)

Although he takes to task here a literal account of Plato's anamnestic theory of knowledge, we must not lose sight of the centrality of this theme in Montaigne's method of composition.

The maxim "Knowledge is but remembrance," as it was apprehended and then rewritten into the essays, is the principle of design animating the

body of his writing. The author (or rather, some representation of what he aspires to portray) is the matter of the essays. His translation of the Platonic axiom "Knowledge is remembrance" into the program of the essays, in both word and spirit, links Montaigne's use of *sententiae* to the larger epistemological concern of the late sixteenth century regarding how man came to know and to view his place in the world. So, whatever we may think of his protestations, he goes on record as recognizing the limits of his natural memory:

All other parts are in me common and vile, but touching memorie, I thinke to carrie the prise from all other, that have it weakest, nay and to gaine the reputation of it, besides the naturall want I endure (for truly considering the necessitie of it, *Plato* hath reason to name it *A great and mighty Goddesse*). In my countrie, if a man will imply that one hath no sense, he will say, such a one hath no memorie. (I.9, p. 44)

The theme of an unreliable memory is a central and animating feature of Montaigne's mode of composition.³³ Montaigne's reiteration of this point in the final essay of his last book provides further insight into what he considered to be at stake in his alleged defective natural memory.

The false steps my memory hath so often put upon me, at what time she stood most upon her selfe, have not idly beene lost: she may sweare and warrant me long enough; I shake mine eares at her: the first opposition made in witsnesse of her, makes me suspect. And I durst not trust her in a matter of consequence; nor warrant her touching others affaires. And were it not, that what I doe for want of memory, others more often doe the same for lacke of faith, I would even in a matter of fact rather take the truth from anothers mouth, then from mine own. (III.13, p. 333)

As a result of his anamnestically oriented compositional practice and the peculiar ways in which he went about expounding commonplace themes by taking truths from the mouths and texts of others, Montaigne discovered a way to revisit the anecdotes of his earlier writings and thoughts. In effect he had a trail or itinerary of places he had been when he was, as it were, another person ("my selfe now, and myselfe anon, are indeed two"). Thus, for Montaigne, *sententiae* were both a means and an end: They were repositories of ancient wisdom and provided a way for him to discover anew profitable information and to revisit sites of his reading and former mental dwelling. Therefore, despite his claim to forget authors, places, and words—and even "[A]s much as any thing else I forget mine own writings and compositions" (II.17, p. 378)—his essays became for him not just a way to register, collect, and situate his novel thoughts related to words from the past but also a

means of recording, dwelling on, and assessing the symptoms of his advancing bodily decay: "For want of naturall memory I frame some of paper. And when some new symptome or accident commeth to my evill [kidney stones], I set it downe in writing" (III.13, p. 356).³⁴

This way of conceptualizing Montaigne's composition—as a sign and result of his construction of an artificial and intertextual memory in and as his book, which came to incorporate and thus give a textual presence to his stones—forms the basis of my close reading of an exemplary passage in the next section. My treatment of the ways Montaigne brings into being a viable space for revisiting those sites of his former mental dwelling is compatible with Martin Heidegger's philological and philosophical excursus on "Building Dwelling Thinking."³⁵ Therefore, to anticipate the theoretical movements of the next section, upon which the final chapters are based (see also Table), let us consider that building, accumulating, and managing—seen as characteristic mortal activities, as constituent parts of the essayist's character, and as conceptual or topical categories of Renaissance metaphors—are focal coordinates in our effort to situate how Montaigne goes about the task of thinking through and of representing the truth of his being.

Heidegger's clarification of the main terms used in his analysis provides a context for our own assessment of Montaigne's relation to the book he spent the last decade of his life writing and refining: in particular, that Montaigne used *loci*, or mnemonically conditioned places, to establish—to build as it were—a dwelling. I am using the term "dwelling" in a threefold sense: as the arresting activity of abiding thought, understood as a mental staying or putting in place of the idea of the essayist's character; as the material site or physical space of retreat from the affairs of the world in which one discovers and articulates what is characterized as the essence of one's being; and as the metaphorical resting place or textual housing of the putative end products of his thinking translated into discursive operations. Thus Montaigne materialized, and came to dwell, in his book, just as his death-dealing kidney stones took form and found a home in his body. This melancholy twisting of the familiar trope of the essayist being inseparable from his book, of the author's being consubstantial to the product of his ingenuity, is one way to bring into plain sight what underlies such a claim—a claim which for too long has been taken as a celebration of the essayist's great enterprise. Something essential to the early modern mentalité thus has been concealed by the very critical efforts that have taken as their main object the explication of Montaigne's textual practices. Montaigne's literary treatment of his body—as of the body of his text, and of the bodies perceived by the essayist to be moving within and through his permeable body, and like the disembodied voices of others lodged within the body of his text—can be seen instructively in terms of Heidegger's musings: "To die means to be capable of death *as*

death. . . . Mortals dwell in that they initiate their own essential nature—their being capable of death as death” (“Building Dwelling Thinking,” p. 328); “I am never here only, as this encapsulated body; rather, I am there, that is, I already pervade the space of the room and only thus can I go through it. . . . Things like such locations shelter or house men’s lives” (pp. 335–36); and “the essence of building is letting dwell. . . . Dwelling, however, is *the basic character* of Being in keeping with which mortals exist . . . thinking itself belongs to dwelling in the same sense as building, although in a different way” (pp. 337–38). Insofar as these three sets of citations point to a way of thinking about the threefold sense of dwelling mentioned above, let me now build on them to replace what seems to have fallen out of discussions of Montaigne’s exemplarity.

THE CITE OF MEMORY

Sententiae shared the storehouse—or dwelling—of exemplary techniques available to Renaissance keepers of commonplaces with *exempla* and similitudes; all three are discussed in terms of being the chief rhetorical strategies in Erasmus’s *De Copia*, as “the eleventh method of enriching,” which “depends on the copious accumulation of proofs and arguments.”³⁶ Although the history of these devices is ancient, by the late sixteenth century fairly standard uses were assigned to the exemplum and sententia: Generally, they were interpolated deeds or sayings serving as an illustration, and which then were elaborated or embellished toward a didactic end.³⁷ Insofar as they were rudimentary units of discourse and integral parts of rhetorical operations from the first through the seventeenth centuries, it may be useful to think of them as “mnememes.” I borrow this term, “mnememe,” from Daniel Martin who has analyzed its general properties as a relationship between image and place in Montaigne, as the *imagines agentes* and *loci* of classical rhetorical theory. The image and place are each in its own right, to use the language of structuralist linguistics, a sign with “significants” and “signifiés.”³⁸ Further, each mnememe brings into relation signs that function as discursive prompts or mnemonic cues. These signs in turn reflect a special kind of knowledge associated with a highly developed sense of visualization, like that required when using topical or artificial memory schemes.³⁹

Conceived of as mnememes, then, the exemplum and the sententia encapsulate and express a historical anecdote or a saying deemed worthy of memory—whether to preserve it from oblivion, to resituate it in a novel context, or to validate and authorize another related point. The exemplum, like the sententia, is a discrete and condensed elocutionary element capable of being augmented or glossed according to one’s aim. But, irrespective of

the end toward which they were used, exempla and sententiae needed to be stored and arranged in a repository, in some container, framework, or dwelling—whether a textual or an imagined one. Among the many textual repositories of selected sententiae, exempla, and similitudes was Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia*, aptly subtitled *A Treasure of Divine, morall, and phylosophicall similes, and sentences, generally usefull*. In a series of strained similes of his own and while using scores of exempla, Meres expounded the sententia *tria sunt omnia* ("All things in Three").⁴⁰ I cite Meres at length because his copious rendering of the three fundamental mnememes displays quite explicitly what, as I will argue, remains implicit in Montaigne's text.

...	all the force of wit may	flow	within	three channels,
	and be	contrived	into	three heads;
			into	
a Sentence,	a Similitude , & an	Example		
		... Carolus Quintus	sayd,	
		that warres	were maintained	with
vituals,	money and	souldiers:	so wit is nourished	with
Sentences,	Similitudes, and	Examples.		
Sentences,	similitudes, &	Examples	are as necessary to uphold wit.	
		... so he that	would write or	speake
pithily,	perspicuously, and	persuasively		
	must use	to have	at hand in	readinesse,
	three	kind of	ornaments and effectual motives,	
Sentences,	Similitudes, and	Examples.		
		And in truth	what can I desire	more,
	then to see	the naked	Truth	
arrayed in	Sentences fitted	the taste	of Phylosophers;	
invested in	Similitudes loved	of Oratours; and		
approved by	Examples, the	rule and leuell of the unstayed and		
		raging multitude?		
		... so haue I long	desired to see three things;	
Truthes	soundnesse in	Sentences,		
her	elegancie in	Similitudes,		
and	approbation by	Examples		
		... so I judge him a happie wit who is		
profound and	substantiall in	Sentences,		
eloquent and	ingenious in	Similitudes;		
and rich and	copious in	Examples.		

Despite his somewhat grandiloquent discussion of what he terms the "triunity" of sentences, similitudes, and examples in the pursuit of Truth, Meres nonetheless rehearses what passed for a basic understanding in the

Renaissance of the value of such intertextual digests. Further, Meres's three-fold characterization of true wit as being predicated on a good digest of sentences, similitudes, and examples implies a far more sophisticated point than his florid prose might suggest at first glance. In his blustering similitudes and examples we can glimpse an underlying and nascent model of the tripartite pattern of human understanding, one which was discussed explicitly by Francis Bacon in *The Advancement of Learning* and which was grounded in medieval "faculty psychology."

Bacon used this model more for convenience than as a serious means to discover absolute truths based on a series of analogical correspondences.⁴¹ He explained that "the parts of human learning have reference to the three parts of Man's Understanding, which is the seat of learning: History to his Memory, Poesy to his Imagination, and Philosophy to his Reason."⁴² Accordingly (as outlined on the bottom portion of Table), the faculties of mind—Memory, Imagination, and Reason—corresponded to specific intellectual arts or domains: History, Poetry, and Philosophy, each of which had a corresponding unit of discourse which encapsulated the types of knowledge proper to it. For example, exempla were used for the compact storing and arranging of historical narratives, great acts and deeds; they served (and depended on) the faculty of Memory.⁴³ Because poesy uses feigned histories, the similitude was the rhetorical trope usually associated with the faculty of Imagination. And finally, the precepts of philosophy can be collapsed into and expressed through pregnant sentences, or *sententiae*. Using each of the three faculties according to its proper end is, for the high-minded Bacon as for more popular-minded Meres, instrumental to anyone wanting to be an effective writer or speaker. Thus *sententia*, *similitudo*, and *exemplum*—as mnememes—as compacted units used to express the content of larger topics, and also as tropological categories in their own right, each according to its own domain yielded precepts, concepts (or conceits), and examples. When used by those trained in, and who worked out of, the commonplace-book tradition (like Montaigne), these most rudimentary units of discourse can be seen as the constituent parts of a mnemonically oriented principle of composition—one that is expressed as a writing practice predicated on discovering, distributing, arranging, recalling, and representing units of discourse. Such a practice, which might be termed an aesthetic of anamnesis (as will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 5), is derived from the five divisions of traditional rhetoric.⁴⁴ When handled by men like Montaigne and Bacon who, because of their educational training and juridical careers, understood this system from the inside out, these elements of discourse quite literally were put in motion and, as a prerequisite for being set down on the essayist's page, needed to be situated somehow within the theaters of

one's mind. Therefore, despite Montaigne's claim to forget authors, places, and words, the seeds of the imported messages—in the form of mnememes—remained lodged within him and were easily transplanted into his essays, even though, as he says, he was likely to forget his own “writings and compositions” (II.17, p. 378). His collected writings, over time, which he used to frame a memory of and for himself, by virtue of the novel disposition of select *sententiae*, similitudes, and *exempla*, constituted the literary digest of his reading, of his judgments concerning his reading borne out by and balanced against experience, and of other selected sites (and citations) that called to mind his former mental dwelling.

To push this contention a step further, Montaigne's literary evocation of his body, and of bodies and voices said to dwell within his body, mirrors the way his essays function as a complex textual body: They supply him with a structure—whether figured as a dwelling place or a treasury—in which to house anecdotes, reflections, citations, and his judgments concerning them. But further, it is here, in the space of this dwelling, that we can glimpse a folding over, a doubling over itself of the metaphorical fabric of Montaigne's textual patchwork, one that preserves the trace of a remarkable double movement. More specifically, we encounter Montaigne's literary movements within the body of his text to examine the movements within his own material body, his humors like his stones, like the metaphorical chimeras; and at the same time we have also a movement outside the text to explore the body of literature that supplied the mnemonic seeds for his own literary corpus (see the top portion of Table). By way of interrogating this double movement, let us look more closely, and analogically, at a later addition in the 1588 essay “Of Experience.” I give below Renaissance and modern translations of the passage and, after the original, a terraced version.⁴⁵ I do this to call attention to Montaigne's internal poetic practice of grouping words, as if under headings, and linking them through such mnemonic cues—especially conceptual echoes, phonic reverberations, and graphic reiterations—so as to charge them with conveying a range of related although occulted emblematic significations (for example the triumphal lineup of the *g* in the cluster-terms “gaigner,” “grand et glorieux” and “regner”; and the linkup of the consubstantial “livre” and “vivre”).⁴⁶

Composer nos meurs est nostre office, non pas composer des livres, et gaigner, non pas des batailles et provinces, mais l'ordre et tranquillité à nostre conduite. Nostre grand et glorieux chef-d'oeuvre, c'est vivre à propos. Toutes autres choses, regner, thesauriser, bastir n'en sont qu'appendicules et adminicules pour le plus.

EMBODYING THE SEED OF MELANCHOLY

		Composer		
	nos meurs	est		nostre
			office,	
	non pas	composer des	livres,	
et gagner ,	non pas	des batailles et	provinces,	
mais	l'ordre	et tranquillité		à nostre
	conduite.			
				Nostre
grand	et glorieux chef-d'oeuvre,		c'est vivre	à propos.
				Toutes
	autres			choses,
regner,		thesauriser,	bastir	
n'en	sont	qu'appendicules et		
		adminicules		pour le plus.

"Have you knowne how to compose your manners? You have done more then he who hath composed bookes." Have you known how to take rest? you have done more than he, who hath taken Empires and Citties. "The glorious master-piece of man, is, to live to the [purpose]": All other things, as to raigne, to governe, to horde up treasure, to thrive and to build, are for the most part but appendixes and supports therunto.

To compose our character is our duty, not to compose books, and to win, not battles and provinces, but order and tranquility of our conduct. Our great and glorious masterpiece is to live appropriately. All other things ruling, hoarding, building are only little appendages and props, at most.

"Ruling, hoarding, building" is how Donald Frame translates Montaigne's "regner, thesauriser, bastir." Florio, using the telltale doublets of his ebullient prose, gives a more complete sense of the semantic field of these terms in the late sixteenth century: "to raigne, to governe," "to hoarde up treasure," and "to thrive and to build." In addition to "thesauriser" implying the accumulation of wealth, it also signified the hoarding of linguistic capital.⁴⁷ The three categories which serve as headings to "all other things"—reminiscent of headings in a commonplace notebook—whether by accident or by conscious design provide us with a pattern for scrutinizing the composition of Montaigne's "character"—in all senses of that term. (Again I would call attention to the Table.) Seeing these terms in relation to one another can help us clarify the extent to which Montaigne's attention to *meurs*, which constitutes his "character," is constructed because of, rather than despite, his claim that ruling, hoarding, and building are mere appendixes to the "glorious master-piece of man." His text bears out that these appendixes are the most one could hope for, and Montaigne's self-conscious construction of his character within and by virtue of the composition of his

essays is unthinkable without the body of his book. “[M]y book and my selfe march together, and keepe one pace. Else-where one may commend or condemne the worke, without the workman; heere not: who toucheth one toucheth the other” (III.2, p. 24). More particularly, it was ruling, hoarding, and building that enabled Montaigne to compose his character through the composition of his book. The author’s body—and by extension “the self”—is that which would be governed; his reading and reflections he would hoard and arrange in his essays, in his storehouse, in his artificial memory; and the building in question is both his text and where it was composed, his ancestral chateau. All of these elements converge, among other places in his text, in the following citation from the essay “Upon some verses of Virgil.”

Plutarch saith, that he discerned the Latine tongue by things. Here likewise the sense enlightneth and produceth the words: no longer windy or spongy, but flesh and bone. They signifie more than they utter. Even weake one shew some image of this. . . . [Plutarch] can no sooner come into my sight, or if I cast but a glance upon him, but I pull some legge or wing from him. For this is my dissignement, it much fitteth my purpose, that I write in mine own house. (III.5, pp. 101–4)

In recalling the scene of Montaigne’s writing in his “own house,” we recall also his Library of Memory and that it was likely indeed for him to cast a glance upon Plutarch’s works and texts as he was surrounded by his books and, overhead, by the visual mnemonic aids that inspired his inventions. All three “appendages” can be seen as coming together as well in the following passage (already cited in connection with Montaigne’s Library of Memory, but which now shimmers in a different light): building, both his ancestral home and the construction of his text; ruling, of his home, his leisure, and “self”; and hoarding, of his books, his words, and the enlarged words of the ancients painted on the beams overhead:

At home I betake me somewhat the oftner to my library, whence all at once I command and survey all my housholde; It is seated in the chief entrie of my house, thence I behold me my garden, my base court, my yard, and looke even into most of my house. . . . It hath three bay-windowes, of a farre-extending, rich and unrestricted prospect. . . . [There I] seclude my selfe from companie, and keepe incrochers from me: there is my seat, there is my throne. I endeavour to make my rule therein absolute. (III.3, pp. 49–50)

Further, building, ruling, and hoarding can also be seen as corresponding conveniently to three domains of Montaigne’s life and text: the Domestic, Private, and Linguistic (identified on the top portion of the table). We can see this more clearly when we elaborate further the ramifications of this

interplay of his body and his text as it pertains to the triplex principle of building, ruling, and hoarding. In the Domestic realm we have the stones of his ancestral home, to which he retired to "settle his thoughts" and "keepe a register of them" (I.8; II.18); in the Private realm are his kidney stones, which he says he also inherited from his father (II.37); and regarding the Linguistic realm, the words from the classical fathers quarried from now ruined civilizations, his select sententiae, were the building blocks of his essays (I.24). When pictured in this way (as is outlined on the table), the analogical strata of the Linguistic, Domestic, and Private in the body of Montaigne's essays enable us to sort out and make sense of the curious relation among writing, patrimony, and kidney stones. Seeing the essays with these corresponding relations in mind enables us further to bring into focus the place of these appendages in Montaigne's characterization of the truth of our being—understood in terms of ruling, hoarding, and building.

According to the context of the passage, however, regarding the degree to which one attends to his character, these three activities seem to float back and forth between planes of prominence and insignificance, between what is considered vital and what trifling to one's being in the world. But the trifling, or marginal, begins to show itself in Montaigne as dangerous, even fatal. Whether referring to aspects of his moral or physical constitution, these supernumerary things, these "appendixes" (as Florio translates "appendicules"), echo textually and thematically Montaigne's characterization of his text as grotesque—as being composed of so many "monstrous bodies, patched and huddled up together of divers members" (I.29, p. 195). As has been observed already (and it bears repeating in the light of the ensuing analysis), Montaigne metaphorized his thoughts as being "so many extravagant *Chimeraes*, and fantastick monsters, so orderlesse, and without any reason, one hudled upon another" (I.8, p. 44). These monstrous and seemingly alien bodies engendered by and inhabiting his imagination have a very real counterpart in his kidney stones. A visual rendering of just such a melancholy landscape inhabited by ranging chimeras appears in Valeriano's *Hieroglyphicorum Collectanea* (1626) (Fig. 3.2) It is worth noting that amidst the apparent chaos of griffins and demons, a many-sided hieroglyphic tablet occupies the focal center of the emblem, and upon it we descry the prominent figure of Death holding a scythe. Indeed, writing, death, and memory come together in this emblem of the phantasmatic forms embodied in the melancholic mind, just as they converge in Montaigne's text.

According to popular views on imagination as the melancholy breeding ground of "idle thoughts and fantasies," monstrous textual scions reflected and were caused by melancholy. Saturn provided the influence; the dark humor supplied the suitable internal conditions; and idleness took care of the rest—for writing was the prerogative of the melancholy man.⁴⁸ As such,

E M B L E M A V.



FIG. 3.2. "Emblema V." Pierio Valeriano, *Hieroglyphicorum Collectanea* (Lyons, 1626), sig. g3. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

it was both a means and an end. Writing of melancholy—and melancholy itself, as will be disclosed in the next section—is the essayist's *pharmakon*, at once a poison and a remedy.⁴⁹ Thus Burton takes as his main theme and treats quite explicitly what remains implicit in Montaigne: The seeds of his inventions found fertile ground in his melancholy imagination and led to the generation of a prodigious text.

If any man except against the matter or manner of treating of this my subject, & will demand a reason of it, I can allege more than one. I writ of melancholy, by being busy to avoid melancholy. . . . When I first took this task in hand, & *quod ait ille, impellente genio negotium suscepi*, this I aimed at, *vel ut lenirem animum scribendo*, to ease my mind by writing, for I had *gravidum cor, foedum caput*, a kind of impostume in my head, which I was very desirous to be unladen of, & could imagine no fitter evacuation than this. Besides I might not well refrain, for *ubi dolor, ibi digitus*, one must needs scratch where it itches. I was not a little offended with this malady, shall I say my Mistress *Melancholy*, my *Egeria*, or my *Malus Genius*? & for that cause, as he that is stung with a scorpion, I would expel *clavum clavo* comfort one sorrow with another, idle-

ness with idleness, *ut ex Vipera Theriacum*, make an Antidote out of that which was the prime cause of my disease. (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1:18)

With this in mind, we can turn now and scrutinize Montaigne's stones with respect to his internal chimeras by remarking on an analogical sequence that emerges from within the body of Montaigne's text. The final section elaborates on this pattern and explores in what sense Montaigne's stones become a kind of macabre mnemonic device that is integral to his program to "endight and enregister these my humours, these my conceits" (III.3, p. 49). This will bring to prominence the curious and complex relation among Montaigne's patrimony and inheritance, his death-dealing kidney stones, and his anamnesticly grounded style of composition; which is to say, more generally, among memory, death, and writing in early modern cultural practices.

THE SIGHT OF DEATH

Montaigne describes the interior of his body with the same perspicacity as when he probes and tests his imagination, without sparing the reader his painful recognition that his life is passing away, bit by bit. This is especially poignant in his reflection on the passing of his bodily fluids; he is prone to

sweate with labour, to grow pale and wanne, to waxe red, to quake and tremble, to cast and vomit blood, to endure strange contractions, to brooke convulsions, to trill downe brackish and great teares, to make thicke, muddy, blacke, bloody and fearfull urine, or have it stopt by some sharpe or rugged stone, which pricketh and cruelly wringeth the necke of the yarde.

. . . Consider but how artificially and how mildly she [death] brings thee in distaste with life, and out of liking with the world. . . . "If thou embrace not death, at least thou shakest her by the hand once a moneth." (III.13, pp. 354–56)⁵⁰

The pain that brings him in touch with his mortality (and, of course, his subsequent joy and relief after passing a stone) also provides an occasion for meditating, not only on his body and his transience but also on his body with respect to his lineage.

What monster is it that this teare or drop of seed, wherof we are ingendered brings with it; and in it the impressions, not only of the corporall forme, but even of the very thoughts and inclinations of our fathers? . . . It may be supposed, that I am indebted to my father for this stonie quality; for he died exceedingly tormented with a great stone in his bladder. . . . Where was al this while the propension of inclination to this defect, hatched? And when he

was so far from such a disease, that light part of his substance wherewith he composed me, how could it for her part, beare so great an impression of it? And how so closely covered, that fortie five yeares after, I have begunne to have a feeling of it? (II.37, p. 496).

Where the composition of his character is concerned, in the end—and in the process of his writing—the mnememes drawn from the classical fathers are, Montaigne claims, “wholly digested” [II.10], even as they are placed in the body of his text; whereas his kidney stones, passed onto him from his father, are what is wholly indigestible.

None but fooles will be perswaded, that this hard, gretty and massie body, which is concocted and petrified in our kidneis may be dissolved by drinks [potions]. And therefore after it is stirred, there is no way, but to give it passage; For if you doe not, it will take it himselfe. (III.13, p. 359)

What emerges here is a more subtle declaration of the maxim that one’s principal duty is to make sense out of the diverse workings of one’s inheritance—whether they materialize as diseases or buildings or language. After all, in addition to having the stones of his chateau and the stones of his kidneys passed onto him from his father (coincidentally whose name, Pierre, means rock, or stone),⁵¹ so too the building blocks of his discourse, Latin sentences, were made a part of his experience before he could judge whether or not he wanted them to become a part of his being. And, if we believe Montaigne’s claim that he was taught Latin before he knew French, then his mother tongue was that of the fathers par excellence (I.26, p. 185);⁵² likewise, his kidney stones emblemize the transfer of paternal substance into the body of his being.

These familiar, yet seemingly alien, bodies within his body enabled him to feel and to represent his sense of life as moments stolen from death—and vice versa. For the stones reminded him, as they passed away, that a little bit of his own life had passed away as well, just as the sign and seed of death dwelling in his body was discharged and, as it were, died a little. Such textual movements easily are associated with Montaigne’s sense of self-loss, paradoxically a condition to which he was so fervently attached throughout the writing of the *Essais* and which led to its growing in strength—and length. For example, sententiously inscribed on the title page of the book containing the last additions penned before Montaigne’s death is the motto: *Viresque Acquirit Eundo* (“It gains strength as it proceeds”).⁵³ In the face of this sense of plenitude and copious abundance, however, riddling his text are images and exempla connoting self-loss. Nowhere is the mitigating sense of self-loss explored in greater depth than the last five chapters of Book II,

especially the final chapter which introduces his stones as a new character in the *Essais*.

Montaigne's relation to his malady, like the ancient cult of Dionysus, can be construed as being essentially tragic and, at the same time, as erotic owing to the frenzy of its disorder. Allusions to the erotic are always capable of arousing irony,⁵⁴ and this is especially the case with Montaigne. For, akin to a Bacchic epiphany, he speaks of being burned from within and of being flayed alive when discharging stones from the site of former sexual gratification. "It is some great stone that wasteth and consumeth the substance of my kidneis and my life, which I avoyde by little and little: not without some naturall pleasure" (III.13, p. 359).

Montaigne reflects on the place of his stones in his passage toward death and anticipates the annihilation of the "self" (the self-same self so often celebrated by readers of Montaigne).

I have by the liberality of yeares acquainted myselfe with the stone-chol-like. . . . I am continually grappling with the worst of all diseases, the most grievous, the most mortall, the most remedillesse and the most violent. I have alreadie had triall of five or six long and painful fittes of it. . . . This commoditie at least I have by the chollicke, that which I could never bring to passe on my selfe, which was, altogether to reconcile, and thoroughly to acquaint my selfe with death. (II.37, pp. 490-92)

In this respect his stones are the physical counterpart to his ranging thoughts engendered in his idleness, which he can contain textually but cannot control either by reason or by philosophical principles; and, much like his fancies, they are set in motion against his will.

In an effort to gain some sort of control over them (both his thoughts and his stones), he recorded and wrote about their movements which, initially, he assessed as being superfluous aspects of his life; but later, upon further reflection, he recognized them as the most essential and vivifying aspects of his book, body, and being. His stones occasioned his extended and attenuated meditation on his inevitable, incremental loss of life. The malady, the dis-ease, swept through his body (seen as a host-body) at its own pace, and the only visible site of the "evil" is his sexual organ—which Florio renders "yarde."⁵⁵ And if the penis is figured metaphorically as the emblem of masculine order and literally as the instrument of self-reproduction,⁵⁶ then its analogous relation to the pen and the activity of literary self-portraiture takes on special resonances for a discussion of Montaigne's literary mediation on and representation of his disease, his "evil" (both the rampant chimeras generated by his idle imagination and his stones).

This sense of abiding in a state of disease, of being out of balance from within (as its etymology implies), ironically is opposed to, and perhaps was the motivation for, the emblematic equilibrium projected by Montaigne on his celebrated commemorative medals: a pair of scales in balance along with the Pyrrhonian motto *Ἐπέχω* ("I abstain").⁵⁷ This sense of "dis-ease" or "mal-aise" for which writing provided some measure of relief but not a remedy is to be understood as an inspired affliction, masked as a cure. It is in this respect that the contradictory, and complementary, connotations and the broad semantic field of the Greek term *pharmakon* (at once signifying disease and remedy) can be used to clarify the end of my analysis of Montaigne's construction of his character.

A translator confronted with the term *pharmakon*, and who chooses one term over the other—whether "cure" over "poison" or "poison" over "cure"—forces his decision on what in Plato (and in Montaigne) remains essentially ambiguous.⁵⁸ In his playful reconstitution of the chain of signification of the *pharmakon*, Jacques Derrida reminds us that any attempt to translate it

produces an effect of analysis that violently destroys it, and reduces it to one of its simplest elements by interpreting it, paradoxically enough, in the light of the ulterior developments it made possible. . . . It partakes of both good and ill, of the agreeable and the disagreeable. Or rather, it is within its mass that these oppositions are able to sketch themselves out.⁵⁹

The same applies to Montaigne's rationale for writing; "for want of natural memory," he constructed one through, and on, paper (III.13, p. 356). This becomes clearer when we compare Derrida's pronouncement, "in disturbing the normal and natural progress of the illness, the *pharmakon* is thus the enemy of the living in general, whether healthy or sick" (*Dissemination*, p. 100), and Montaigne's:

my great grandfather very neere fourscore, and never tasted or tooke any kind of Physicke. And whatsoever was not in ordinary use amongst them, was deemed a drug. *Physicke is grounded upon experience and examples*. So is mine opinion.*** Physitions are not content to have the government over sicknesses, but they make Health to be sicke, lest a man should escape their authority. . . . I have often been sick, and without any their helpe, I have found my sicknesses (though I never medled with the bitternes of their prescriptions) as easie to be tollerated and as short, as any mans else. (II.33, pp. 497–99)

As with Derrida's assessment of the *pharmakon* as artifice interfering with the natural course of things, so too is it with Montaigne's sense of writing

based on exempla, as a kind of *pharmakon* which cannot simply be assigned a site within what it situates, nor can it be subsumed under concepts whose contours it draws.⁶⁰ The *pharmakon*, as pertains to Montaigne's textual practice, is the movement, the locus, and the play (and the production) of difference—within himself and his text. The final line of Book II, appropriately in this context, reads: "Diversity is the most universall quality."

The presence of the *pharmakon*, as both cure and affliction, is most noticeable in the diverse histories and exempla in II.33–37 and, like medicine, is "grounded upon experience and examples." Montaigne's most memorable examples—especially the trial made of Zenocrates' constancy ("maugre all Philosophical discourses . . . his skittish body began to mutinie, he caused those members to be burned, which had listened to that rebellion" [II.33, p. 457])—concern excessively violent actions, undertaken as remedies, and directed against one's body. Again, by mining a rich vein of examples (a program he records at the end of Book II as being the ground of all medicine and "physic"), Montaigne demonstrates that many, in seeking to exempt their minds "from the continuall alarumes, which this appetite did assail within them have used incisions, yea and cut off the mooving, turbulent and unruly parts" (II.33, p. 456). Such self-mutilation is the tragic underside of his mock legal defense of the rebellious, "unruly member" involuntarily stirred to action by the power of the imagination (I.20). The most powerful exemplum along these lines is "The Historie of Spurina" (II.32), a Tuscan gentleman,

endowed with so alluringly-excessive and singular beautie, that the chastest eyes could not possibly gainsay or continently resist the sparkling glances thereof, not content to leave so great a flame succourless, or burning fever remedillesse, which he in all person, and every where enkindled, enter into so furious despite against himself . . . that with gashes, and skars, he wittingly mangled, and voluntarily cut that perfect proportion and absolute feature, which nature had so curiously observed in his unmatched face. (II.33, p. 463)

An implied moral here is that to become obsessed with earthly pursuits is to commit oneself to a course of action that is often weak and ridiculous, sometimes cruel, and always, from a philosophical point of view, unprofitable and vain.⁶¹ This knowledge comes at a great cost, and only after a great—even excessive and perhaps fatal—expenditure of *zoe*, of one's life force. Appropriately, the chapter containing Spurina's story begins with a commonplace mnemonic image of man as a reasonably governed estate, a theme we have seen explored in the passage concerning the composition of character from "Of Experience":

La philosophie ne pense pas avoir mal employé ses moyens quand elle a rendu à la maison la souveraine maistrese de nostre ame et l'autorité de tenir en bride nos appetits. (II.33, p. 389)

Philosophy thinketh, she hath not il employed hir meanes, having yeilded the soverign rule of our mind, and the authoritie to restraine our appetites, unto reason. (II.33, p. 456).

But philosophizing does not help remedy the stones or purge the rampant chimeras of his imagination; philosophy teaches one to die well. Indeed, with Spurina as with Zenocrates, as with Montaigne's stones, the disorder seems to come from nowhere and yet demands attention when most you think yourself safe from aggression or invasion. With this in mind, I would cite again a passage already considered but now call attention to Montaigne himself serving as an exemplum recorded in his book like Spurina or Zenocrates. As author, subject, and example, Montaigne becomes a vehicle for his textual continuation. Also, like other exempla in his text, his own symptoms and history become a mnememe in their own right. What is more, this passage concerns the very topic of conveyance. (Further, let us keep it in mind for it will serve as a bridge to my discussion of this same process, theorized more completely, in the chapter to follow.)

What monster is it that this teare or drop of seed, where of we are ingendered brings with it; and in it the impressions, not only of the corporall forme, but even of the very thoughts and inclinations of our fathers? . . . It may be supposed, that I am indebted to my father for this stonie quality; for he died exceedingly tormented with a great stone in his bladder. . . . Where was al this while the propension of inclination to this defect, hatched? And when he was so far from such a disease, that light part of his substance wherewith he composed me, how could it for her part, beare so great an impression of it? And how so closely covered, that fortie five yeares after, I have begunne to have a feeling of it? (II.37, p. 496)

Montaigne's stones can be construed as vehicles that transfer the seed of inevitable and painful death from one generation to the next; they are signs and agents of the living death brought about by burning and stoning—from within. Yet insofar as they also transfer life from one generation to the next, they can be seen in an analogous relation to metempsychosis (the transmigration of souls). In its Renaissance formulation metempsychosis, which is linked to the Platonic doctrine of anamnesis (that knowledge is based on remembrance),⁶² parallels Montaigne's literary practice of gathering the voices of others (many who have been dead for centuries) and transferring them to his own text. The essays, in turn, are animated by those same

disembodied voices. The resulting "polylogue" is what gives to the *Essais* their special kind of life and character.⁶³ Further, Montaigne's stones, like the Neoplatonic notion of the soul, can be figured as an exemplary vehicle that passes life on to future bodies and carries within it the seed of its own death. In this sense they function like the figure of metaphor itself, upon which its power to confer and convey meanings is grounded.⁶⁴ Carried to its logical (although ironic) conclusion, the family of Montaigne is like a series of host bodies which enable the perpetuation of the death-dealing stones as they are passed from one generation to the next; for it is the stones—like a perverted version of Neoplatonic souls—that transmigrate and eventually come to rest in a new body. With this in mind, let us pause to analyze in passing the Neoplatonic notion of memory with respect to writing which is central to Montaigne's *Essais*.

According to Cicero's understanding of Plato's *Phaedo* (as commented on by Macrobius), the soul is drawn to the body in a state of intoxication.⁶⁵ The term used for this state is the same as a potent drink (*pharmakon*), and we are told this signifies the influx of matter that burdens the soul and drags it down. Montaigne discusses these higher elements incidentally in his essay, which Florio translates as "Of The Worthiest and Most Excellent Men" (II.34, p. 482). The visible sign of this Platonic mystery, as an astral mnemonic device set against the backdrop of the heavens, is the Cup of Bacchus (a constellation traditionally situated between Cancer and Leo). Along with this intoxication of the soul comes its companion, forgetfulness, already beginning to creep into the mind. The Cup of Bacchus—as a designated place in the heavens, as an imaginary sector in the journey of the soul, and also as an emblem of Dionysus—dazzles as well as intoxicates us with earthly preoccupations. In the Platonic tradition, especially as developed by Plotinus, the soul, like the dyad of body and soul, was itself bipartite, consisting of lower and higher elements (not the whole soul enters the body; the higher part remains in the intelligible world, and the lower part remains united to the sense-world). Every soul has a lower part turned toward the body and a higher part turned toward divine Intelligence.⁶⁶ Speaking of the gestation of the soul, Macrobius commented:

Itself while still in embryo, as a seed, remains in the human soul especially the lower part of the soul, as in the thigh; where it is both nourished and hidden; and where it causes such pricking, pains, and depressions in the mind, that its resolutions and actions labour and limp with it.

This description of the gestation of the "lower part of the soul" with its pricking, pain, and melancholy parallels Montaigne's stones as a generative force in his writing.

And like the fledgling soul described by Macrobius, Montaigne sought to exorcise and express, in his textual movements, all that had had a role in forming the "self" as he understood it and as he represented it to himself through his writing: the stones making up the tower of his site for writing, the stones backed up within his urinary tract, and the backlog of lapidary words from the books upon which his education was based and which in turn provided the foundation for the composition of his essays. Montaigne seems to have recognized, metaphorically if not existentially, this play of *pierres* (of stones—and of "fathers"; Pierre, it bears repeating, was the name of Montaigne's father) and of the attending lapidary connections, for he compared his escalating bodily decay, emblemized through his stones, to the ruin of an old building.

Now I entreate my imagination as gently as I can, and were it in my power I would cleane discharge it of all paine and contestation. A man must further, help, flatter and (if he can) cozen and deceive it. My spirit is fit for that office. There is no want of appearances every where. Did he perswade, as he preacheth, hee should successfully ayde me. Shall I give you an example? He tels me, it is for my own good, that I am troubled with the gravell: That the compositions of my age must naturally suffer some leake. (III.13, p. 353)

This last, and richly suggestive, phrase is given in the original as: "que les bastimens de mon aage ont naturellement à souffrir quelque goutiere" (p. 1068). Florio's rendering of "bastimens" as "compositions" retains the connoted multiple senses of an artificial construction related to hoarding, ruling, and building, of a literary patchwork of one's character (those appended accomplishments of one's life), and of an aged edifice. Thus, in the *Essais* as in the general usage of the day, these senses illumine one another; "bastimens" was taken to mean "a building, frame, house, or edifice"; also, "a composition, or compaction of many things together."⁶⁷ Not only is there a parallel between Montaigne's composition of his character and the composition of his book, but the semantic sense implied here can be thought of as the mortar that runs throughout, and holds together, the various building blocks of Montaigne's discourse, and thus of his literary life work and subsequent self-portrait. His chateau was composed out of the stones of the region—the earth—and owed its construction to the labor of others; his body owed its being to his parents and the labor of his mother; and his book he composed out of the words of others.

Each part so far discussed, then—chateau, body, and book (corresponding to the domains of Domestic, Private, and Linguistic, as outlined in the table)—can be understood more comprehensively when we see them as corresponding as well to the headings Context, Sex, and Text. The Context

for his writing, ostensibly, is his retreating from the world and recollecting his experiences and readings; his body is known to him through his various members and their "unruliness" (I.21), a knowledge which comes to presence in and through the memory and textual recollections of Sex (III.5); and his book, of course, is the master's Text, and the master text of the "self"—and that which he seeks to master. The chateau is his dwelling; his body, the casing of his humors; and the book, the repository that encased and gave a form to his thoughts, experiences, and judgments.

The activity of composing his essays, no less than the themes they investigated, enabled Montaigne to compose his character (*meurs*). We recall from "Of Experience" that this is our primary duty, not to rule, hoard, or build, which are mere appendages or members tacked onto the body of our life work. And in Montaigne's case this applies to his literary life work as it does to the composition of his character—which brings together and culminates his effort to rule, hoard, and build. With this in mind, we can see in a new light a key passage usually read as the author's most cogent statement of his union with his book:

In framing this pourtraite by my selfe, I have so often been faine to frizle and trimme me, that so I might the better extract my selfe, that the patterne is therby confirmed, and in some sort formed. . . . I have no more made my booke, then my book hath made me. A booke consubstantiall to his Author: Of a peculiar and fit occupation. A member of my life. (II.18, p. 392)

It may well imply a union, but one that refers to the constitution of the character created as a result of the essays—seen as they are as composite and alien elements tacked onto the essayist's being and having a power over it. The resulting image he saw of himself thus was a fractured body which, like his book, was a pastiche of disparate apothegms and appendages clustered around and tracing their textual lineage back to mnememes—namely, *sententiae*, *exempla*, and *similitudes*.

To the end I may in some order and project marshall my fantasie, even to dote, and keepe it from loosing, and straggling in the aire, there is nothing so good, as to give it a body, and register so many idle imaginations as present themselves unto it. I listen to my humours, and harken to my conceits because I must enroule them. . . . I never studie to make a booke; Yet have I somewhat studied, because I had already made it (if to nibble or pinch, by the head or feet, now one Authour, and then another be in any sort to study). (II.18, pp. 392–93)

Montaigne recognized aspects of himself in the books he read and in the book he spent the last part of his life writing and rewriting. He tried to

represent all of the fragments and divisions, the sinews, bones, and stones of his being. It is in this sense that knowledge for Montaigne—and the discourses of knowledge available to him, predicated on the categorical mnememes *exemplum*, *similitudo*, and *sententia*—can be said to be based on recollection. His literary endeavor to compose his character, “to register so many idle imaginations as present themselves,” reflected his epistemological quest, quite literally, to re-member and thus to give a body to—which is to say, “to digest”—the *membra disjecta* of his experience, even as he felt his life slip, piece by piece, toward death and oblivion.

It is in this light that I recommend we read Montaigne’s address to Mme. de Duras: “car je ne veux tirer de ces escrits sinon qu’ils me representent à vostre memoire au naturel” (II.37, p. 446)—“For al I seeke to reape by my writings, is, they will naturally represent and to the life, pourtray me to your remembrance” (II.37, p. 520). As Steven Rendall has observed of this passage, “the resemblance that makes re-cognition possible depends upon a previous knowledge. . . . The transparency of meaning Montaigne postulates in the face-to-face encounter is at once the cornerstone of his conception of a written self-portrait and the mark of its fragility.”⁶⁸ His relation to his text, his many-layered, temporal record of the movements of his humors which are made present to his imagination and then set before his eyes in writing, is a record of his relation not to his own death to come but to the death he knows he already is. This is not a sense of death as becoming, or even a state of being-toward-death, but of death as being itself. Thus, as a kind of memorial, Montaigne says he will “place and reduce” his “conditions and faculties” in his text, which he describes as being

a solide body, which may happily continue some dayes and yeares after mee: Where, when soever it shall please you to refresh your memory with them, you may easily find them, without calling them to remembrance; which they scarcely deserve. . . . I have desired and aimed at sufficiencie, rather for the benefite of my present and essential commodities, then to make a storehouse, and hoard it up for mine heires. (II.37, pp. 520–21)

And yet, still, despite his protestations to the contrary, Montaigne’s essays become for us, who are among his heirs, a storehouse in which to house aspects of his textually conditioned identity. Its trace is discovered through a series of mnemonic nuances, cues, and cross-references, through select exempla, similitudes, and sententiae. Once these mnememes, like seeds, are planted into the soil of Montaigne’s fertile text, they serve to memorialize the evanescent trace of the skittish and turbulent, prior presence of Montaigne. He characterizes his essays as just such a terrain, into which he transplanted prunings taken from others.⁶⁹ Florio’s English trans-

lation remains faithful to Montaigne's use of this commonplace horticultural conceit of the florilegium combined with the false-humility *topos*:

If in reasons, comparisons, and arguments, I transplant any into my soile, or confound them with mine owne, I purposely conceal the Author, thereby to bridle the rashnesse of these hastie censures, that are so head long cast upon all manner of compositions, namely young writers, of men yet living. . . . For my selfe, who for want of memorie, am ever to seek, how to trie and refine them, by the knowledge of their country, knowe perfectly, by measuring mine owne strength, that my soyle is no way capable, of some over-pretious flowers, that therin I find set, and that all the fruits of my encrease could not make it amends. (II.10, p. 93)

When we probe this intertextual compost heap (Montaigne's *solage*, his *terroir*), we soon discover the figure of a material body, disembodied:

I principally set forth my cogitations; a shapelesse subject, and which cannot fall within the compasse of a worke-manlike production; with much adoe can I set it downe in this ayrie body of the voice. . . . Parcels of a particular shew: I wholly set forth and expose myself: It is a Sceletos; where at first sight appeare all the vaines, muckles, gristles, sinnewes, and tendons. (II.6, p. 60)

The image of a "Sceletos"—an anatomized or dissected body or, in this case, a vivisected one—with which Montaigne figures his relation to his text is as much an emblem of modern techniques of empirical observation as it is the earlier traditional *memento mori* emblem of *vanitas*.⁷⁰ This sense of double play between literal and allegorical meanings that share a single framework, and dwell together, points the way toward the next chapter. Therefore, let this carry us over and serve as our conceptual bridge, to the theme in Chapter 4 that the metaphoric processes and conceptual structures we think of as carrying meaning are never far from Death.

FOUR



Plotting the Passage of Death

Cervantes and Baudrillard

Recalling the figure of Death as handled by Milton and discussed in Chapter 2, and reflecting on its implied though sublated presence in Montaigne's more personal but no less idiosyncratic portrait of life-in-death and death-in-life discussed in Chapter 3, let us turn now to visual and literary texts concerned with the prospective relation one has to the shadow of death, and to oneself as the caster of that shadow. This double relationship we have toward death (as an image or simulacrum and also as a chief aspect of ourselves, of our being in the world) is expressed in terms of the very possibility of our being able to represent, or map, the conditions of our mortality. For maps, consistent with the way mnemonic principles of composition were discussed in Chapter 1, are repositories of graphically and symbolically encoded information that can be scanned quickly and assimilated in a glance. Maps, therefore, owing to these mnemonic affinities, provide us with an effective way to discuss early modern responses to being in the world.

As Harley and Woodward have contended, "the primary function of cartography is ultimately related to the historically unique mental ability of map-using peoples to store, articulate, and communicate concepts and facts that have a spatial dimension."¹ To this I would add that, as my research bears out, concepts and facts having a temporal dimension, no less than those having a spatial dimension, are conveyed through self-consciously allegorical maps of mortality in the early modern period. This temporal dimension takes the form of a teleological scheme in connection with a transhistorical sweep, much like what we saw in Milton's treatment of death as both a process and a character. Likewise, as with earlier *memento mori*

tokens, we see an image of ourselves (in the present) reflected back to us as we will appear at some future time, as the unspeakably horrible face of Death. This kind of macabre specularity took on many forms during the seventeenth century, all of which were designed to impel the viewer to reflect on the horrible appearance of death, and also to conceptualize and see beyond the even more horrible thought of ourselves as (being) nothing. This sentiment is voiced in John Moore's compendious *Mappe of Mans Mortalitie*:

for there are [those] that fear not so much to die, as to be dead. If the pang be bitter, yet it is but short, but the comfortlesse state of the dead, strikes some farre deeper, that could well be resolved otherwise for the act of their passage. The very not being is sufficiently abhorred of nature if Death had no more to make it fearfull.²

The sense of horror, like the abhorrence of the idea of oblivion, is mitigated somewhat through the recognition that death is not an end in itself. This implied and prospective passage from life to death is treated elsewhere by Moore as a trope of transportation, in a passage that has topical and allegorical resonances for the body of this chapter, especially the concluding section. In the section "What Death is itself," Moore instructs us that although death may appear horrible,

[y]et he that is armed with faith, is well assured that it is sent for his profit, to be as his hackney to carry and convey him from earth to heaven, from pain to pleasure, from misery, vexation, grief, and woe to endlesse mirth, melody, and joyes unspeakable with God for ever. (Sig. D5v, p. 42)

Death, both as described by Moore's straightforward metaphor and in the more sophisticated theoretical sense of Derrida's characterization of metaphor itself, is a vehicle—we might even say it is the ultimate vehicle of humankind. As was argued previously, we can see in Milton's image of Death the portent of allegory's doom in the seventeenth century with respect to the trajectory of Western metaphysics. Not only is Milton's character of Death able to be read as an allegory of man's doom, but it is itself a doomed allegory of "the other shape." What is more, it is doomed in a double sense: It signals a reckoning, a taking stock of what is manifestly present and real in the world; and it is also an allegory which, by its very construction, implies its own ultimate undoing—for its very coming to presence begins the steady tugging of the master thread which culminates in the unraveling of the metaphorical fabric of its own poetic constitution. And so we catch a glimpse of its obviously constructed character; we see as well within it a token of the implosion of meaning associated with baroque artifice more generally. Walter Benjamin has remarked in this regard that

among the traits of the self-conscious allegorist was that he did not conceal the fact that his activity was one of arranging, "since it was not so much the mere whole as its obviously constructed quality that was the principal impression which was aimed at."³ We can see subtle differences in the articulation of this complex theme as it is carried out in other cultural expressions of the early modern period. All of the examples mentioned in this chapter involve a kind of macabre specularity. Each in its own way draws on and surpasses the implications of simple *memento mori* tokens; by virtue of their ingenious and often self-reflexive conditions of artifice they manage to communicate the most profound subjects pertaining to the human condition. For, as Benjamin has suggested, the greater the implied significance, the greater the subjection to death, because "death digs most deeply the jagged line of demarcation between physical nature and significance. But if nature has always been subject to the power of death, it is also true that it has always been allegorical."⁴

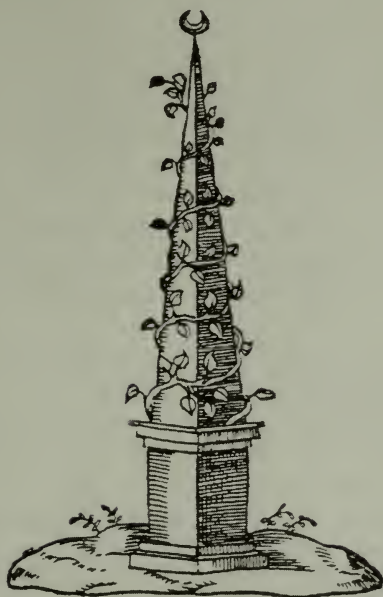
Nature, even in its most physical sense, is subject to allegory in a most compelling way—the implications of which return us to the trace of death in the world. For example, in a papal bull that led to the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, Pope Alexander VI fixed a "line of demarcation" 370 miles west of the Azores. Thus was the New World partitioned into Spanish and Portuguese colonial regions (Fig. 4.1). This Portuguese map, made within a decade of the treaty, ignored well-known English voyages and placed Newfoundland east of the line—on the Portuguese side. But that is not all that was ignored. Then as now, the desires of the people indigenous to the terrain thus marked by those who command the power to enforce the "reality" of such imaginary lines are not reflected in what the map records.⁵ By the same token, in the nineteenth century a color, usually red, could be found in every part of the globe; it stood for possessions (or aspirations) of the British Empire. This and other similar designations publicly declare sovereign desires—like the fanciful territorial claims on Antarctica today made by more than twelve countries; or, more tragically, Khadafy's 1986 "line of death" asserted across the Gulf of Sidra, or the more recent "line in the sand" drawn by George Bush between Iraq and Kuwait.

In this sense, such jagged lines of demarcation between physical nature and significance can be seen as contemporary chorographical versions of Renaissance *impresa*, in that they are public, though carefully coded, declarations of an intended purpose or undertaking.⁶ This can be seen, for example, in the celebrated device the cardinal of Lorrain had placed upon the entrance at the Abbey of Cluny; it signaled that if the king remained firm in his commitment to the Church, then it would (along with the cardinal) flourish (Fig. 4.2). Such symbolic declarations and graphic designations, of course, do not confer any phenomenal status on the objects or territories of one's



FIG. 4.1. Cantino Planisphere (1502).

Te stante virebo.



Entrant dernièrement Monsieur le R. Cardinal de Lorraine en son Abbaye de Cluny, estoit esleuee au portai d'icelle sa Deuise, qui est une Pyramide, avec le Croissant au dessus: enuironnee du bas iusques en haut, d'un beau Lierre verdoyant. Et le tout acompagné, de l'inscription qui sensuit:

Quel Memphien miracle se haussant
Porte du ciel l'argentine lumiere,

Laquelle

FIG. 4.2. "Te stante virebo." Claude Paradin, *Deuises Heroïques* (Lyons, 1557). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

desire; and yet they do make real the expression of that desire and thus, symbolically at least, bring it to presence. Such projections of lines of demarcation are endowed with a sovereignty of meaning that ends up taking precedence over the realities they were meant to signify—what Jean Baudrillard suggestively (if not allegorically) has discussed in terms of the precession of simulacra.⁷ And so, by recounting Jorge Borges's parable with which Baudrillard launches his exposition on the precession of simulacra, let me begin my own commentary on melancholy specularity. Unlike Baudrillard's construction and reading of the parable, however, mine is concerned with allegorical maps of man's doom, with the doom of allegory, and with a focal moment in literary history that brings together the first two items in this list—and where "literary history" is understood as a parable in its own right having pretensions to a kind of conceptual sovereignty.

VISUAL PARABLES OF FRAMES AND MARGINS

For the greater glory of his reign and to vaunt his dominion, the emperor wanted a map of the terrain over which he was lord. He wanted a map so magnificent that it would show every identifying landmark, monument, and natural feature of his empire. He wanted the map to be so accurate in its presentation that every valley and stream would be shown in exacting relief. The imperial cartographers consulted among themselves, and their consensus was that the only way to accomplish this feat would be to make the map the same size as the territory itself. The map would have to be placed on top of the terrain it was meant to signify. And this was done. Centuries have passed. Does any trace remain of the map or, for that matter, of the empire? Time, which antiquates antiquities (to borrow a phrase from Thomas Browne), consumed bits and pieces of the map and, in some places, vast portions. In other areas, only the map remained, and what it once stood for long since had been washed away or otherwise had vanished from sight. Today, therefore, it is not clear where the terrain ends and fragments of the map begin. Other things remain obscure as well: Who was the emperor? By what authority did he call into being such a map? But let us not question too closely. After all, it is just a story—a parable. And insofar as it is a parable, what is the moral? Is it simply that the map is not the territory? No, because surely that much is obvious. What then are we to take it to mean?

In his analysis of a version of this parable, Jean Baudrillard has suggested that abstraction today is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept.⁸ He continues:

Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. . . . Henceforth it is the map that precedes the territory—PRECES-

SION OF SIMULACRA—it is the map that engenders the territory and if we were to revive the fable today, it would be the territory whose shreds are slowly rotting across the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges subsist here and there, in the deserts which are no longer those of the Empire, but our own.

The vestiges or footprints of the real, if we turn and retrace them, can lead us to a knowledge of what came before, to an idea of a time when the territory was projected as preceding the idea of its map. If “today” is the time when the simulacrum precedes the real, then let us presume, for the moment, that we can frame some image of “literary history” which would enable us to look back on allegory in the seventeenth century and examine the origins of this transformation. Inasmuch as “origins” ever can be located, the “precession of simulacra”—understood as a category of thought applicable to the “post-modern,” metacritical mentalité—shows up at the end of the sixteenth century.⁹ We can detect its presence, as a sign, in the allegorical character of Death embedded within, even as it twisted free from, the dialectical relation of Memory and Oblivion in the Renaissance. As Mircea Eliade has remarked, “in so far as it is ‘forgotten,’ the ‘past’—historical or primordial—is homologized with death. The fountain of Lethe, ‘forgetfulness,’ is a necessary part of the realm of Death. The dead are those who have lost their memories.”¹⁰

In what follows I will look at documents designed to remind the viewer of this. I will discuss these emblematic reminders in the light of their being represented so ingeniously as to deter the reader from slipping into an untroubled relation with any commemorative tokens—or maps—of mortality. To assist us in this mental exercise (and to anticipate the theoretical trajectory of both this and the final chapter), let us consider Eliade’s contention that, “philosophically speaking, it is not so much the memory of specific things and events that are to be remembered, but rather the memory of truth, which is to say of the structures of the real.”¹¹ It is the structure of what now passes for the real that can be remembered and thus seen as being overtaken by what it has come to represent, by virtue of simulacra.

To spell out the implications of the parable in question, we need to look beneath the ground of Borges’s story and Baudrillard’s interpretation; therefore let us look closer at the traces of the telluric contours poking through the metaphorical map of this compounded allegorical terrain. To locate a meaning of the parable of the emperor’s map (and of my parabolic mapping of it), let us now designate the territory over which our parable has dominion and identify the corresponding points to which the parabolic coordinates are linked. Broadly speaking, the territory is the realm of the Sign. Maps, whose reality is grounded in the graphic and symbolic registers of

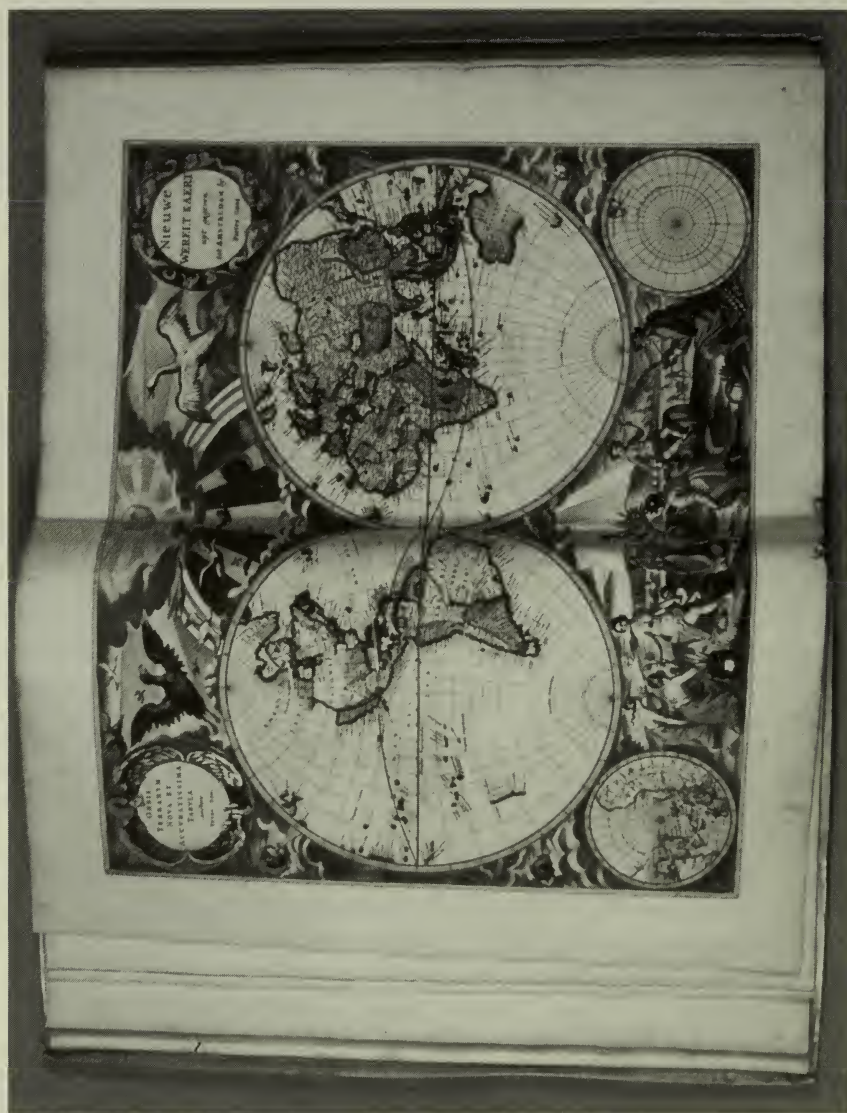


FIG. 4.3. World Map. Pieter Goos (Amsterdam, 1666).

thought, can be considered visual parables insofar as they convey something beyond their attributed territorial designations or implied lines of implications. Like verbal parables, maps are expressions of a desire to clarify, or by indirection to indicate, what otherwise exceeds the scope of regular, mortal vision. They outline what cannot be possessed in any real sense (as was seen with the emperor's map). They mark clearly (and thereby bring to presence, symbolically at least) the contours of what otherwise remains inaccessible and just beyond mortal reach. It is in this respect that what I am striving to document in this chapter best can be understood in terms of what Tom Conley has referred to as "the graphic unconscious," and with respect to what I have called "projective memory."¹²

The literature of the early modern period, Conley argues, forms the basis for our recognizing a simultaneously perspectival and linear feel of the page or printed text. This is my concern as well; and I want to attend to the possibilities of visual scansion, if you will, in works that are composed so as to body forth an evanescent frame, a series of centers or crossings, anamorphic inscriptions, or mobile cartouches. Maps, like parables or utopian projections, outline and describe a series of correspondences that are self-consistent within the realm they mark out, and which somehow are related to identifiable points in the world. According to C. S. Peirce, these conditions are what characterize maps in general.¹³ What may not be as obvious, however, is the extent to which maps—of whatever kind—can be seen to mediate, and function as direct expressions of, the graphic unconscious in the early modern period. This can be most readily seen in works using ingenious techniques of self-referential symbolization that ring out from the center toward the outer margins, so as to frame one's reading of the text and, by extension, of the world and one's place in it.

Pieter Goos's 1666 world map provides an ideal point of departure (Fig. 4.3). The four winds decoratively and decorously are placed outside the world, which is split into two circular frames showing the west and east hemispheres, and below them—neatly balanced by the informational cartouches in the top corners—are projections of the northern and southern polar regions (even though in the latter case, *lower right*, there is scarcely anything to record). This map presents a multiple point of view with regard not only to space but also to time. For here, in an allegorical tableau, as in many literary utopian projections (ranging from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1 to Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 3.6), the seasons appear concurrently and in concord. The empirical data displayed here are framed by a virtual dialogue of allegorical figures and iconographic features. Despite the apparently contradictory modes of representing knowledge, this map does not make us choose one over the other.

To understand more about the unproblematic coexistence in this map of



FIG. 4.4. British Isles. William Bowyer, *Heroica Eulogia* (1567). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

what today we would consider a relation between the principal subject and the supplementary, decorative, or marginal matter, let us consider further that, even though the level of geographical awareness of the area being mapped may be fairly high—as in Bowyer's 1567 *Heroica Eulogia* (Fig. 4.4)—it is not unusual to find a dragon or two swimming in remote areas (as that above the floating royal arms, for example). One exaggerated case in point is Ortelius's 1585 map of Iceland (Fig. 4.5). In this map, in an age that knew better, a fairly matter-of-fact geography is encircled by a collection of the most fantastic sea monsters ever to converge in a single cartographical locale.¹⁴ More than a bid to depict what had elsewhere been poetically or empirically described (for a description or brief history of sightings of these creatures is recorded on the back), visual texts like this one reflect a will to represent what exceeded—and, in some cases, preceded—the powers of mortal vision and visitations.¹⁵ This theme comes into view more explicitly in regions marked “terra incognita,” connoting a shortage of reliable knowledge because of mortal limitations—as in Goos's rendering of the land mass north of the island of California (Fig. 4.6). The same can be said of the projection of the northern wastes shown in Fig. 4.7, where the empty, uncharted areas fancifully are filled with charming otters and awesome sea monsters. The shorelines and ports, however, are taken more seriously—which only goes to show that the seventeenth-century mapping enterprise, like earlier, more self-consciously allegorical Renaissance mappings of the world, was one which comfortably entertained portolan charts and purely decorative elements within the same projection. And this brings us now to a complicated juncture in my analysis of the graphic unconscious, and a working hypothesis for this section: Where projections are concerned, dragons (in mid-seventeenth-century maps), like utopian landscapes, have much in common with death—for they all ask and beg the question, How to describe what exceeds the power of mortal vision or visitation?

As is the case with *terra incognita*, death is that about which no one can report certainly; or, as Shakespeare's Hamlet speculated: “death, [is] the undiscovered country from whose bourn / No traveler returns” (3.1.80). John Moore succinctly put it, also in spatial, voyagistic terms: “Death therefore in a word, is nothing else, but a departing from life” (sig. C6). In addition to being figured as a foreign country or the condition of one's travel to that alien land, death, as we have seen in the previous chapter, took on a personified character as well. It was this trope that enabled the conception of death in the early modern period to take on a life of its own—beyond being conceptualized (such as it was) as vast wastes of empty geographical space or a passage to oblivion. Whether figured as conquering king or as “the Lady and Empress of all the world” from whose “sentence there is no appeale,”¹⁶ or depicted as a messenger or divine summoner from a mysterious realm to



FIG. 4.5. Iceland as Hell's Gate. Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1582). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.



FIG. 4.6. California as an island. Pieter Goos (Amsterdam, 1666).

which we all must travel, Death's graphic presence was mapped on the human body (Fig. 4.8; and see also Fig. 2.6). And yet its allegorical representation was based on an image of the human body as a wasted and ruined terrain. It is in this sense that the figure of Death can be seen as an early modern herald of the precession of simulacra; and, as such, it warrants our steady gaze. John Moore, among others, summed up the double view of being seen in terms of both shadow and substance, of life and death, just as did the starkly contrasting views of each state of our being in the "Mirror of Life and Death" (see Fig. 2.5): "Death and Life are as two twins, vnited and knit together, vntill the separation of the soule and body, which separation is called Death" (sig. S2v, p. 260).

All of the cases discussed so far—from world maps to the image of death mapped onto our bodies—have assumed that depicting improbable or emblematic status is better than not being able to ascribe any status at all to the territory in question—whether that improbable status takes the form of time-honored icons and allegorical figures, grotesque or fantastic creatures, or verbal markers used to frame a view of terra firma. Maps (broadly speaking), despite both their implicit concern with depicting plenitude and their pretense to a mimetic mastery and containment of nature, generally and

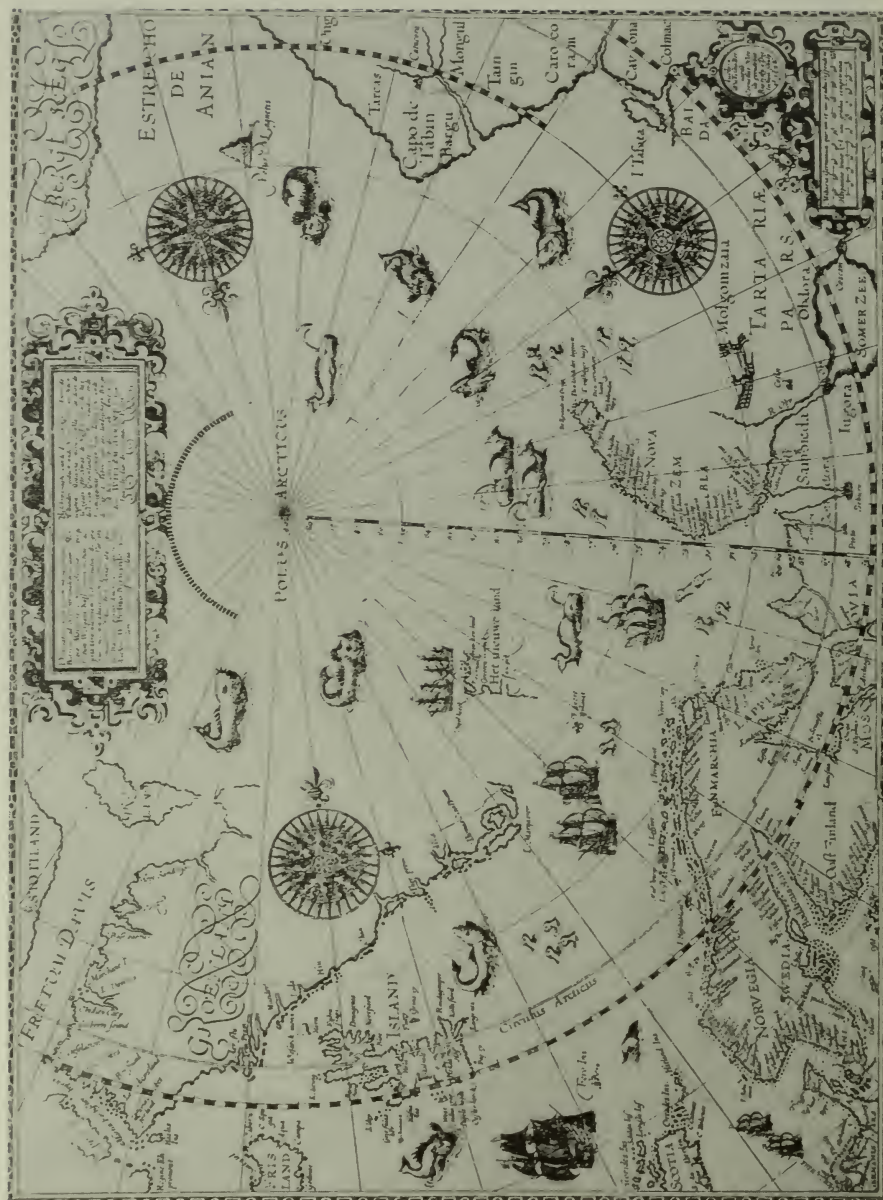


FIG. 4.7. Polar Region. Linshoten, *Navigatio ac itinerarium* (1599).



FIG. 4.8. Image of Death. Polytych by Hans Memling (fifteenth century).

inevitably signal the extent and limits of mortal knowledge and of human artifice.

Hondius supplies us with a more graphic display of this thematic plan: Allegorical characters signifying worldly vanities are placed at the foundation of the known world (Fig. 4.9).¹⁷ The figures comprise a verbal and graphic text on the adversaries a Christian soldier meets in the world; he strives here, symbolically and literally, to keep them at bay. In such a map

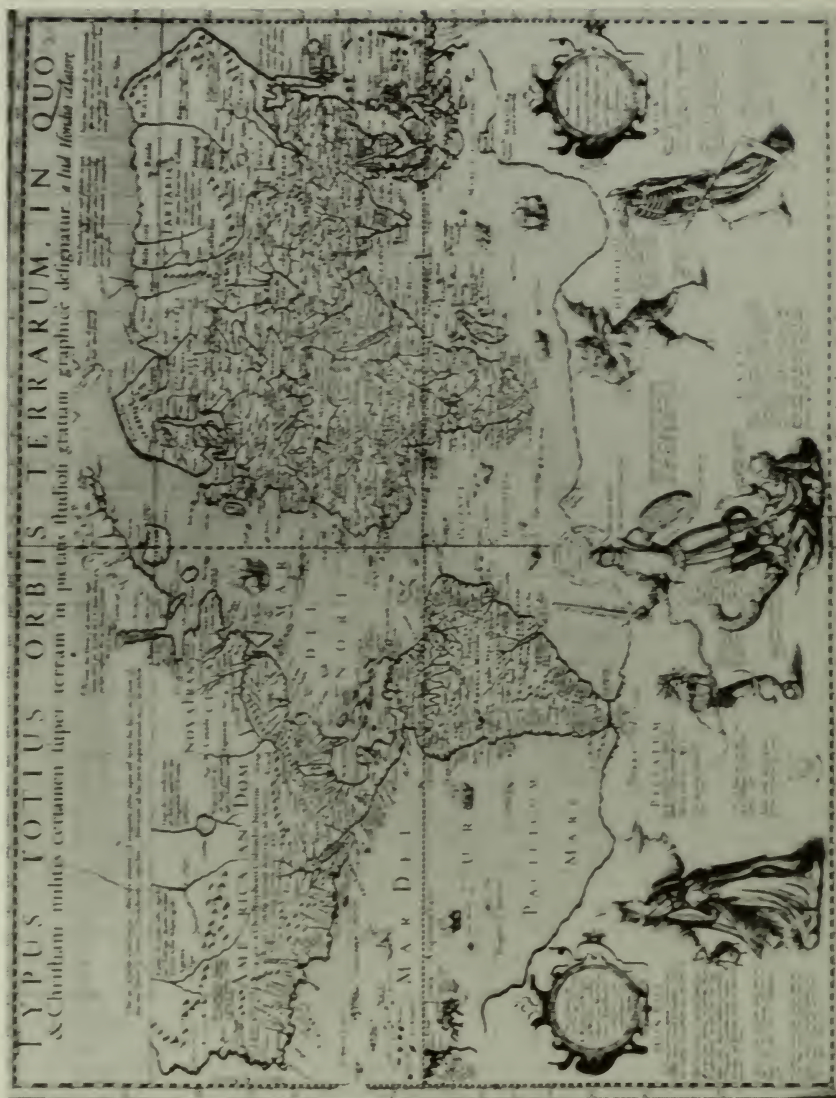


FIG. 4.9. "Typus Totius Orbis Terrarum," Jodocus Hondius (1596?).

we are invited to read the world at once allegorically and empirically; further, insofar as we have before us a map of the extent of mortal knowledge, we glimpse yet another aspect of mortal vanity. By juxtaposing representations of two registers of thought—the symbolic, through commonplace emblems, and the real, associated with impeccable cartographical data—this map self-critically relates, through its very mode of presentation, more than might a typical devotional emblem, like that by the Jesuit Sucquet, which likewise contains personifications of sins of the world and the flesh, the devil, and death (Fig. 4.10). But the allegorical character of death, both in Sucquet's *Via vitae aeternae* and in the map by Hondius, is tucked away, toward the back—and in the farthest corner. What is or should be most apparent to us symbolically remains farthest from our view (at the extreme bottom right), a theme depicted more explicitly by Daniel Hopfer (Fig. 4.11). Here the personification of the vanity of the flesh and the world is shown as a courtesan who cannot see what is most immediate and imminent: death and the devil.

This symptom of being unable to read what is within one's purview is more ironically emblemized in an episode of Holbein's mid-sixteenth century Dance of Death when Death pays a visit to the Astrologer (Fig. 4.12). Death picks up the Astrologer's desk ornament, "death's head," which functions both as a token of death and as a symbol identifying the scholar's pretention to serious pursuits. Reaching over the window from the world outside, and thus violating the complacency and intimacy of the Astrologer's world, the skeleton startles him to make him recognize the vanity and folly of his endeavors in the face of death. The image of Death holds up to the scholar, and thus the viewer, an abstracted image of itself (its head) to make the Astrologer see what, every day, has been before him in a double sense: what materially has been before, or in front of, his gaze, and also what awaits him after he has ceased to be.

Less obvious, as we shall see, is Peter Apian's unexpected encoding of the death's head, which doubles as a cartographical convention along the bottom margin of a vision of earthly plenitude. But before looking at this emblematic mapping of mortality, let us recall first that most representations of the winds used the same general pattern. For example, in a 1522 map based on de la Salle's fifteenth-century text, a "wind" woodblock is used in each corner along with an identifying tag (Fig. 4.13). More up-to-date world maps from the same period, like the one by Peter Apian shown in Fig. 4.14, personified the various winds and placed them at the outer rim of the world. In this map, as in Goos's world map, the faces of the winds are similar, except for slight variations in age or gender (following iconographic traditions).¹⁸ However, in another world map also by Peter Apian—as in a later map by Jeronimo de Girava (1556)—the southernmost winds are meant to



FIG. 4.10. "Image VI." Antoine Sucquet, *Via Vitae Aeternae* (1620), p. 158. Photo courtesy of The Newberry Library.



FIG. 4.11. "Whore, Death and the Devil." Daniel Hopfer (sixteenth century).

be associated with the face of death, and thus they comprise an unexpected danse macabre (Figs. 4.15 and 4.16). The inverted heads of death, thus disposed, signify more than chilly, fatal southern winds; they mark a departure from typical faces usually placed outside the world. It is not so much the use of the death's heads that we should note in Apian's map as it is the ingenious crossing and confusing of the registers of the symbolic and the real. This is what makes the effect in both works so memorable and chilling.

The same can be said of a thirteenth-century *mappamundi* known as the Hereford world map (Fig. 4.17). Within, and spilling out of, the painted framework are images of mankind's origins and ultimate destination, moving inexorably toward the establishment of the New Jerusalem.¹⁹ As might be expected from a medieval *mappamundi*, whose primary purpose was to instruct the faithful about the significant events in Christian history rather than to record their precise locations, despite additions made to this map to reflect developments in cartographical knowledge,²⁰ over all it exhibits a profound ignorance of the physical contours of the world in general (including Scotland and England with which Richard of Haldingham, one of the principals in its composition, would have been familiar).²¹ The map features minutely detailed scenes from the Bible and concerning the panoply of Church history, accompanied by blocks of descriptive text. Like other maps

Indica mihi si nosti omnia. Sciebas quòd
nasciturus esses, & numerum dierū tuo
rum noueras? IOB XXXVIII.



Aspiciens curuum ficta sub imagine cœlum,
Euentura alijs dicere fata soles.
Dic mihi, si bonus es uenturæ sortis aruspex,
Ad me quando tibi fata uenire dabunt?
Inspice præsentē, quā fert mea dextera, sphaerā,
Te melius fati præmonet illa tui.

FIG. 4.12. Death visits Astrologer. Hans Holbein, *Imagines Mortis* (1557). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

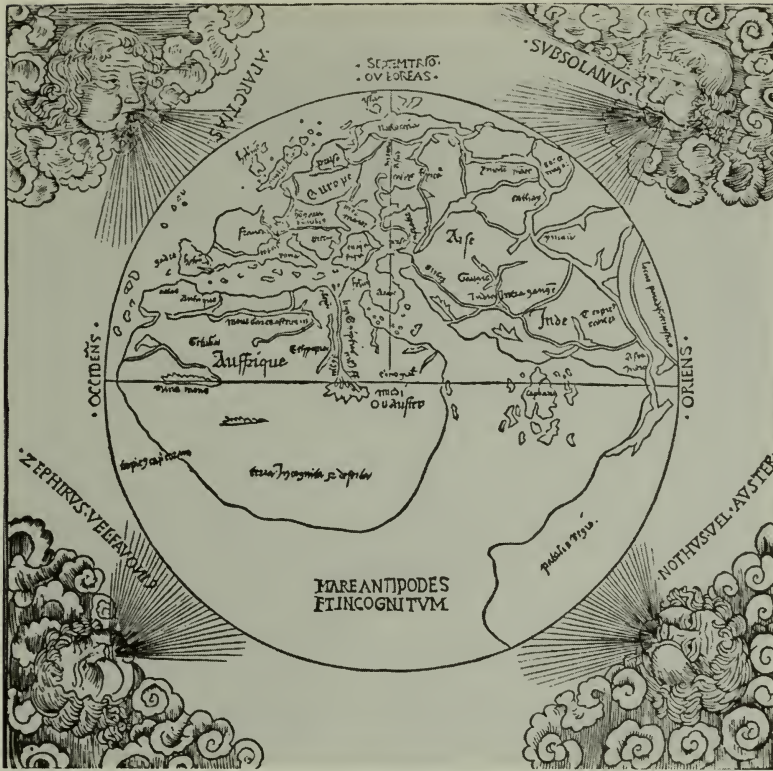


FIG. 4.13. Map showing Four Winds. Antoine de la Salle (Paris, 1522).

of the period, it divides the globe into three parts (Jerusalem as the center; "Paradise" in the East; and the Straits of Gibraltar in the West). But unlike other maps, this one contains a supplementary, although fragmented, puzzle along the outer border. The letters "M," "O," "R," and "S" are tucked away, almost out of sight, in each of the four corners (Figs. 4.18–4.21). These letters spell out our end. Thus death is pushed to the furthest limits of this visual text on conceptual plenitude. When our eyes wander the transtemporal routes of Christian military and divine history, we take in the word of death and, for a time, lost sight of the world.

Instead of the four winds suspended outside the scope of our world, these letters describe another kind of influence: one bodied forth in the word of death. Further, they speak of still another kind of power: that of language to call to mind what stands over and against our being. Breaking down the word of death, and scattering its four literal characters to the four corners of the world, symbolically mirrors what death does to us all. The word of



FIG. 4.14. "Typus Orbis Universalis." Peter Apian (Vienna, 1520).

CHARTA COSMOGRAPHICA, CVM VENTORVM PROPRIA NATVRA ET OPERATIONE.
 Cereus, Root nootwest, Septen Septentrionalis, Root, TRIO. Aquilo Root nootwest, Hellefontius
 Root no o; droest ORI Subfolanus Root ENS. Vulturinus Root sup droest.



FIG. 4.15. World Map. Peter Apian, *Cosmographia* (Antwerp, 1550). By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

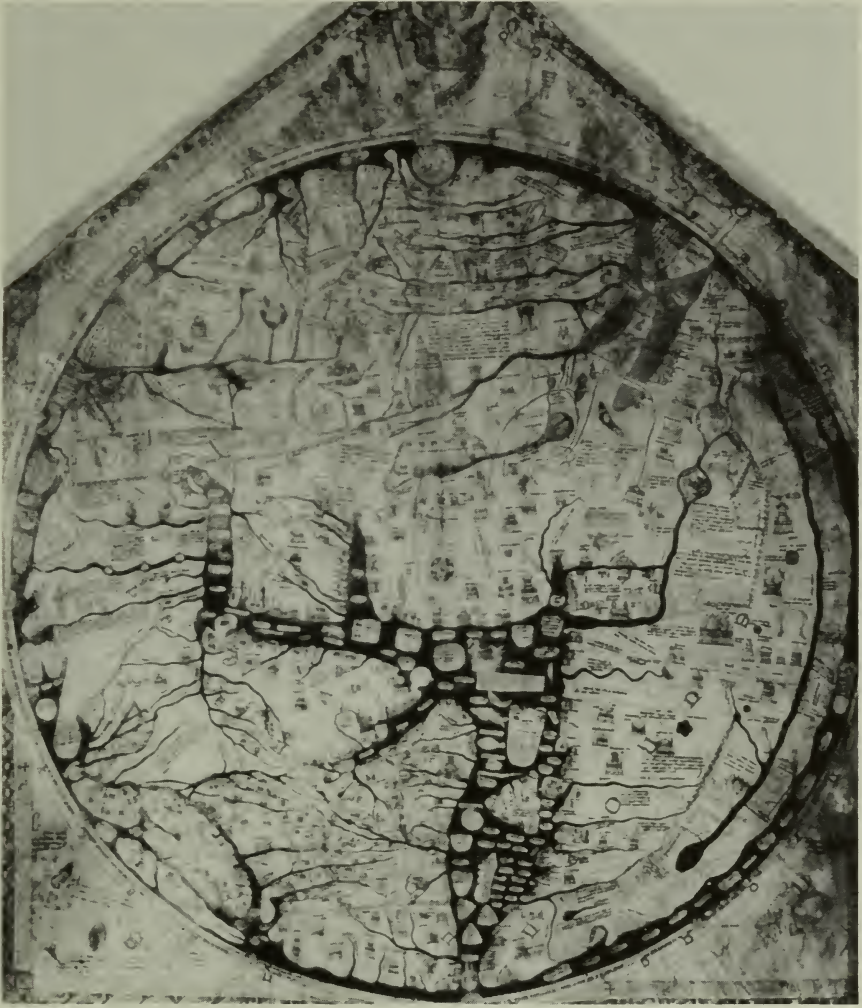


FIG. 4.17. Hereford World Map (c.1280).

death, as we reassemble it into a recognizable name, is discovered to be what frames the graphically depicted and highly idealized mirror of our world-in-miniature.

The same approach to combining maps of the world with allegorical maps of mortality can be seen in the curious map attributed to Jean de Gourmont (Fig. 4.22). In this map (which Robert Burton referred to as "Epichthionus Cosmopolites" in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*), as with M-O-R-S in the Hereford map, Folly is made into an emblem that frames and



FIG. 4.18. "M" at top left of Hereford World Map (c.1280).

directs our reading of the affairs of the world. That the word of death is easily transformed into the face of Folly should come as no surprise. As Foucault has suggested, folly in the Renaissance was the *déjà-là* of death.²² Folly thus provides a context for seeing all things in relation to it and serves as the term mediating the poles of laughing Democritus and weeping Heraclitus. This is made clear through the lapidary verse in the cartouche at the left of the map. And yet, as with Hondius's map (Fig. 4.9), the overtly allegorical element is kept distinct from the meticulously wrought map. The cartouche, like the numerous emblems, mottoes, and medals declaring our folly and vanity, is placed outside of the mundane sphere. The moral implication, of course, is that we are unable to see the determining character of our lives from where we stand, at some point in the world. This was part and parcel of an ancient paradox made popular again in the early modern period by Erasmus and Burton: The epitome of wisdom is to recognize that none is exempt from folly—especially and including one who recognizes the truth of this adage.

Sebastian Brant took up this theme in his much translated and enormously popular *Ship of Fools*. Folly, an Everyman character, is made the



FIG. 4.19. "O" at top right of Hereford World Map (c.1280).

central figure in a series of admonishing verse satires that expose the many faces of vanity and mortality. Just as Holbein's illustrations of Death visiting men and women of all social stations use many of the same emblematic techniques (familiar icons and monitory words), Brant used the figure of Folly to show many of the improper choices of roads we might take in the journey of life. What is called for is a map of mortality, and, as we have seen, such maps took on many forms during the early modern period. The paradigm of life being a journey, governing the sequence of illustrations in the *Dance of Death*, gives coherence to the seemingly random assemblage of images in the *Stultifera Navis*. Although concerned with depicting behaviors and attitudes rather than social stations, the *Ship of Fools* kept in circulation many familiar allegorical characters. In fact, the characters from these two symbolic traditions are brought face to face, as it were, in one of the illustrations from Alexander Barclay's English version of Brant's text, *The Ship of Fools* (1509)²³ (Fig. 4.23). In this illustration Death tugs at the Fool and forces him to acknowledge his presence. Trapped within the same frame as Death, Folly vies with Death for a kind of supremacy that can exist

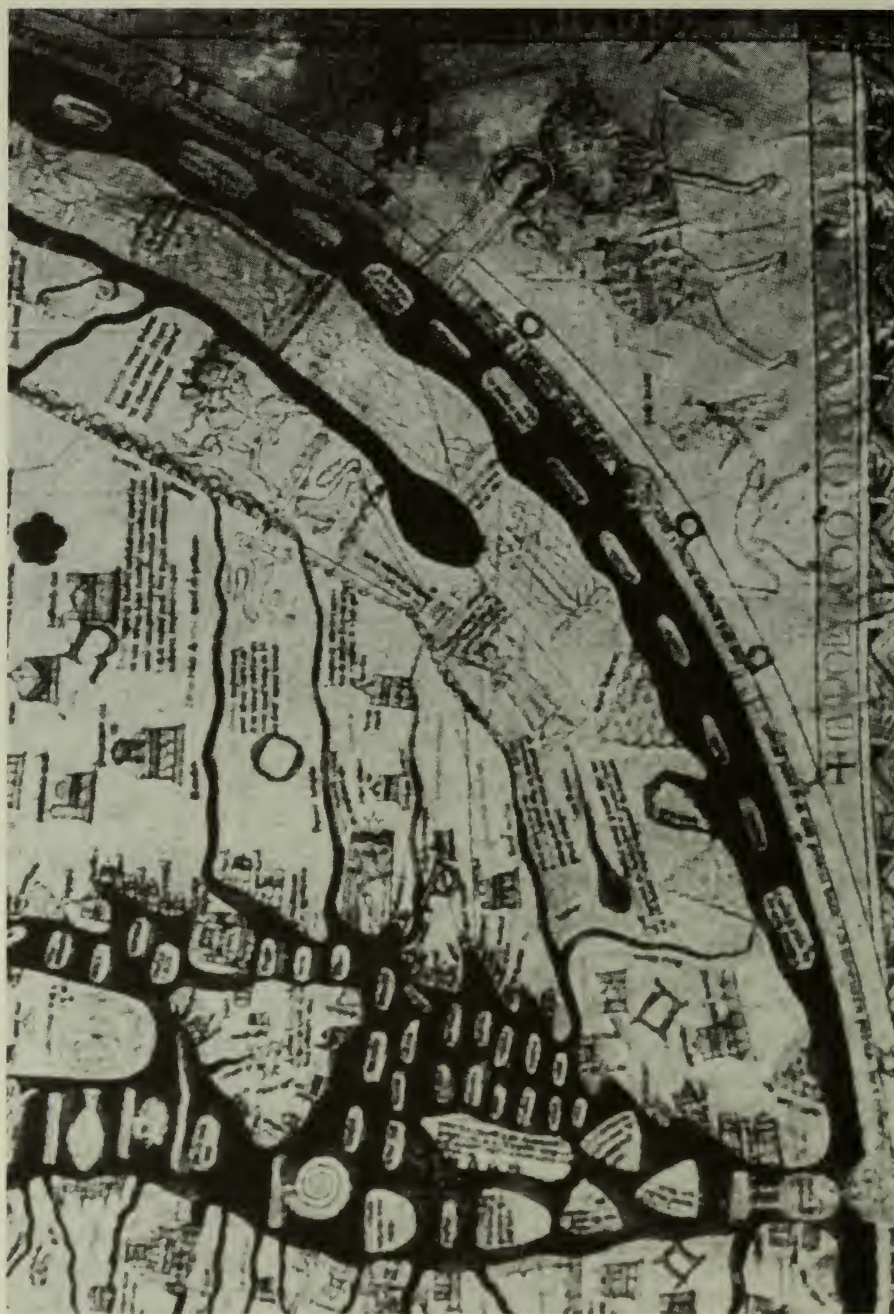


FIG. 4.20. "R" at bottom right of Hereford World Map (c.1280).



FIG. 4.21. "S" at bottom left of Hereford World Map (c.1280).



FIG. 4.22. Fool's Head World Map. Jean de Gourmont (Paris, c.1590). Photo courtesy of The Newberry Library.

only in the realm of allegory. And while it is appropriate that Folly should encounter Death in the context of the chapter called "Of Fools that despise death making no provision thereof," Death's invasion of Folly's text has the same visual effect as when Folly is brought into step with "Mors" in the Dance of Death. And yet, Death always seems to win in the end, as can be seen in Fig. 4.24, an English reworking of a typical continental danse macabre. This image occurs as part of the border decoration in a prayer book instituted for home use during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

As with earlier versions of this series, Death visits men and women of all degrees and uses the implements of their trades or stations to mock them; the walking corpses mimic and mirror earthly activities with unmistakable and relentless irony (Fig. 4.25). From emperor to infant, everyone collapses into the role of fool, just as everyone, at last, collapses into the arms of death (see Fig. 2.7). The border images only incidentally can be applied to the prayers printed on the same page; they are, in the fullest sense of the term, marginal. Or are they? For when seen in sequence these illustrations form a book-in-miniature which symbolically and visually reminds the viewer of the "outer limits" of his or her existence. As such they are to be read as a map



FIG. 4.23. Fool meets Death. Alexander Barclay, *Ship of Fools* (1509), sig. F5 (fol. 177). Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.



FIG. 4.24. Death visits Fool. John Daye, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1578), sig. Gg3v.

of mortality; and, as with allegorical constructions of ideality more generally, they can be seen to constitute and condition our framing of the “real”—perhaps more so than a written text.

The Dance of Death adorning the margins of the *Booke of Christian Prayers* takes on additional significance when we see this series of illustrations with respect to the larger plan of the book’s visual program. In addition to the Dance of Death, the *Booke* contains six other chief sets of border illustrations, each of which constitutes a discrete sequence, which, when seen each in the

light of the other, reflects a larger, more encompassing plan—which is intended to be constructed as an elaborately structured map of mortality.²⁴

The first text known as a *Booke of Christian Prayers* (1578), gives the impression of being wholly distinct from the 1569 *Christian Prayers and Meditations*—were it not for the border illustrations of biblical events and the Dance of Death.²⁵ These are the link, both textually and intellectually, between the various states of the text. Each edition of the *Booke of Christian Prayers*, from 1578 to 1608, retains these same key elements for its margin illustrations. Although the grotesque ornaments occasionally are printed upside down in some issues of various editions, and although some of the allegorical figures are absent from the 1590 edition, the fixed order of seven discrete sets of border illustrations remains stable and fixed for every version of the text.²⁶

Each of the seven units follows venerated and popular graphic and thematic conventions. The subjects of each section are distinct and easy to follow. The first sequence narrates the life and teachings of Christ (Fig. 4.26). The page layout, in obvious imitation of the earlier *Bible of the Poor*, includes a bottommost block which is divided into two compartments.²⁷ This part of the *Booke of Christian Prayers*, like its predecessor, the *Biblia Pauperum*, was not a repository of erudition but a compendium of commonplace interpretations for a lay readership.²⁸ Quotations from the Old and then the New Testament appear as if on a wall between two men dressed in the manner of biblical sages, who point to the verses that constitute typological interpretations of the events depicted along the vertical margins. To see how this worked, let us compare a page from a *Booke of Christian Prayers* and one from a blockbook *Bible of the Poor* (cf. Figs. 4.26 and 4.27). Looking at these two versions together reminds us of the intertextual and transhistorical way of thinking about Christian doctrine that was both prevalent and popular from the mid fifteenth through the mid seventeenth centuries.

Both pages capitalize on New Testament uses of earlier scriptural events for self-referential purposes: Joseph being lowered into the well and thus into temporary captivity (Genesis 37); the entombment of Christ (Luke 23); and Jonah thrown to the fish (Jon. 2:1–11). Translations of the text accompanying these images clarify their relations to one another: “Joseph prefigures [*significat*] Christ who was placed in a cistern, that is the tomb his friends took Him down from the cross” and “A mighty fish straightway swallowed him in whose belly he spent three days and three nights. Jonas prefigures Christ who was in the belly of the earth three days and three nights.”²⁹ This kind of parallel elucidation provides the Christian reader with a visual cue for recalling the scriptural evidence of Christ’s carrying out and fulfilling the divine plan. Further, it supplies the reader with a series of



FIG. 4.25. Death visits Alchemist. Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1590), sigs. L11v–L12. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

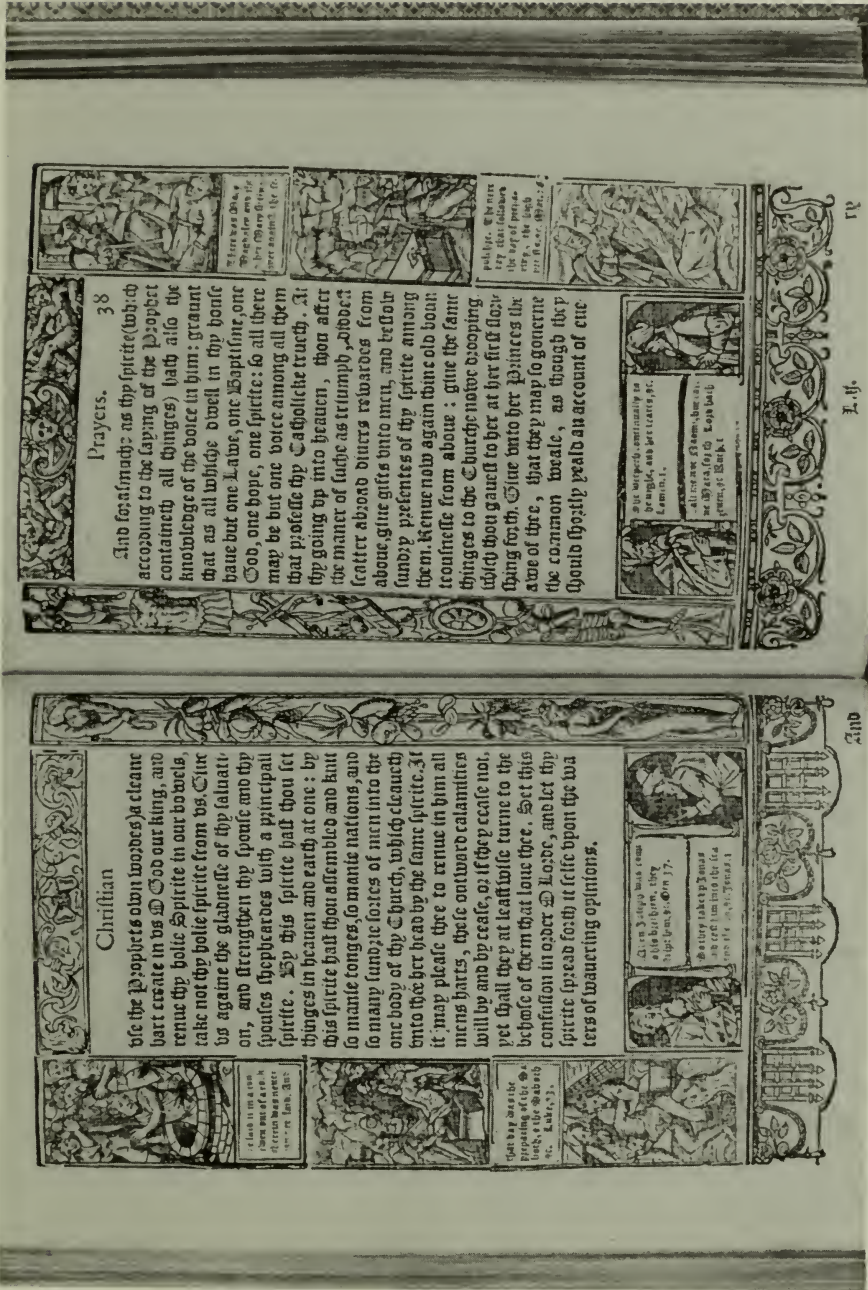


Fig. 4.26. Entombment of Christ. Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1590), sigs. L1v–L2. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

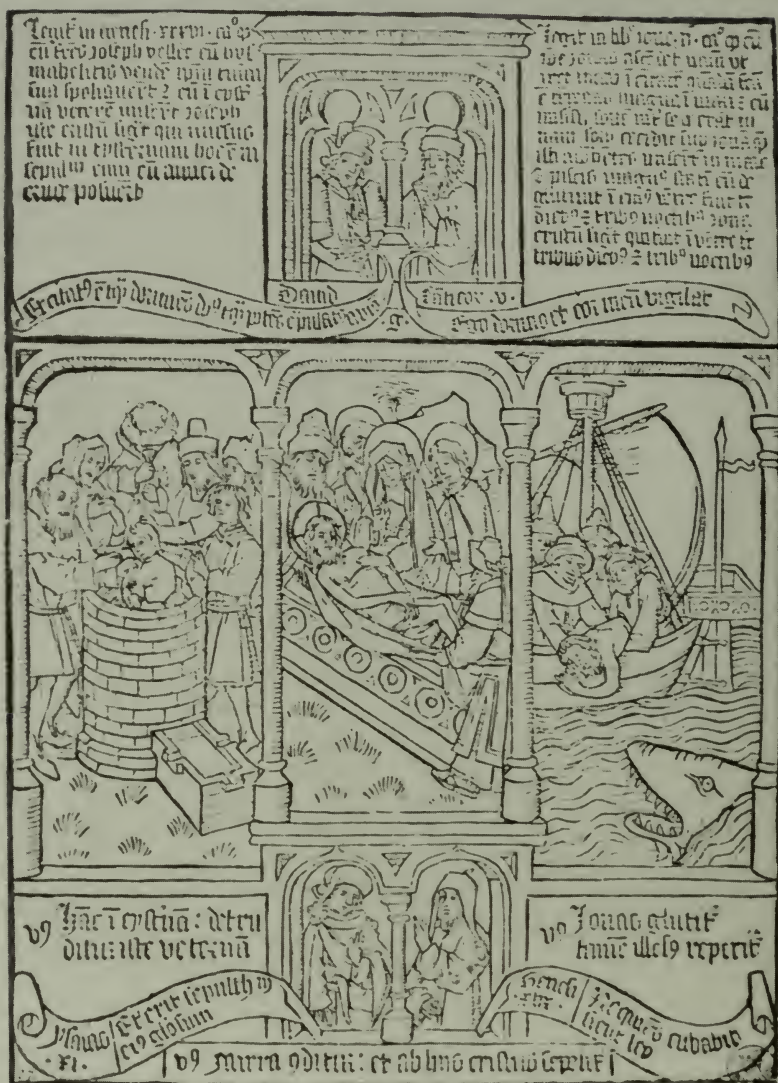


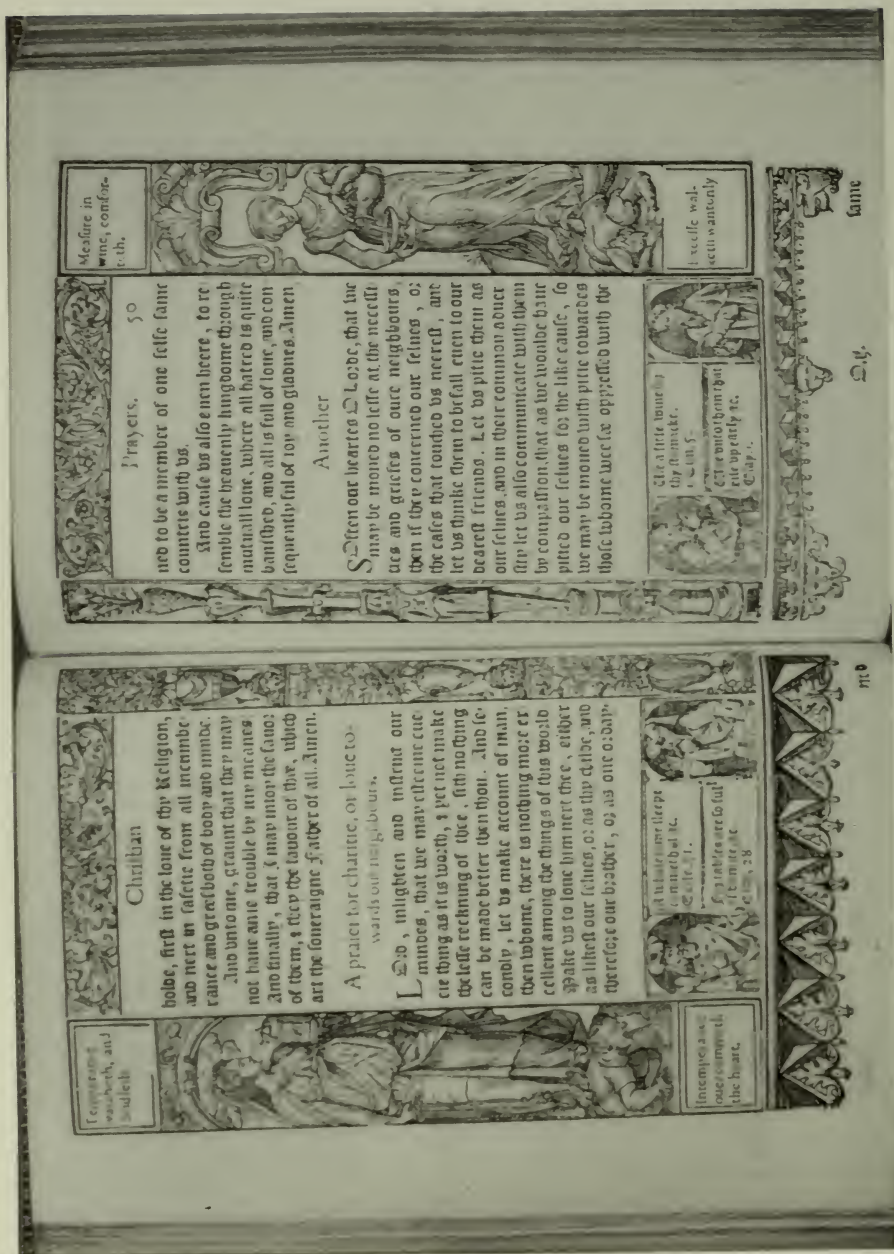
FIG. 4.27. Entombment of Christ. *Biblia Pauperum* (late fifteenth century). British Library, London.

memorable images and biblical passages, the recollection of any one of which is sufficient to trigger his recall of others, thus creating for him an internal network of intertextual glosses. Further, a commemorative construction like this one, illustrating and detailing the extent of the divine scheme, can be activated by any single narrative element called to mind, from the temptation of Eve to the feast of Job's sons (corresponding to the Annunciation and Christ's gathering the blessed under his mantle). Points of doctrine as well as salient stories from the Bible can be viewed together and sequentially. The prevalence and importance of such devices, used as a repository of memory images, should not be underestimated. For example, Ludwig Volkmann documented an Antwerp text from the mid sixteenth century that followed the architectural page layout of the *Biblia Pauperum* but which, instead of illustrating events within the biblical narrative, represented within the traditional sequence of walled partitions on the page ("antiken System der 'Wände' zu folgen") various hieroglyphical emblems designed to trigger the recollection of precise verses within books of the Old and New Testaments.³⁰

The second series of images depicts personifications of Christian virtues with their opposing vices, whether taken from biblical or pagan sources. For example, Temperance is shown above its opposite, and Measure is contrasted with Excess (Fig. 4.28). These images of selected virtues (including personifications of Christian Soldier, Chastity, Justice, and Industry) are intended as emblematic "memory images" and follow the decorum of figurative mnemonics of the day. They are made more striking, and thus more memorable, by being shown in conjunction with and overcoming their opposites.³¹

The third series depicts scenes from daily life with reference to manifestations of Christian Charity. The fourth returns to personifications, this time of the senses, placed above their counterparts in nature. The fifth sequence uses four scenes and corresponding verses describing the Apocalypse (Fig. 4.29). It is in this context that we catch our first glimpse of skeletons in the visual sequences, here illustrating the prophecy: "The bones of the ded shall appear aboue ye sepulkers." In the lower right panel, the dead are figured, appositively, rising from their graves with incorruptible as opposed to decayed bodies. The three places reserved for marginal, explanatory text, which correspond to the three startling images, leave no doubt as to the events of that terrible day of judgment and day of wrath: "Euery one liuing shall die presently. / Heauen, earth, & all elements shall burne. / The dead shall rise."

The next sequence is the Dance of Death, and the seventh sequence picks up the themes in Christian eschatology (Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell) where the fifth had left off. The plan is obvious: The Dance of Death



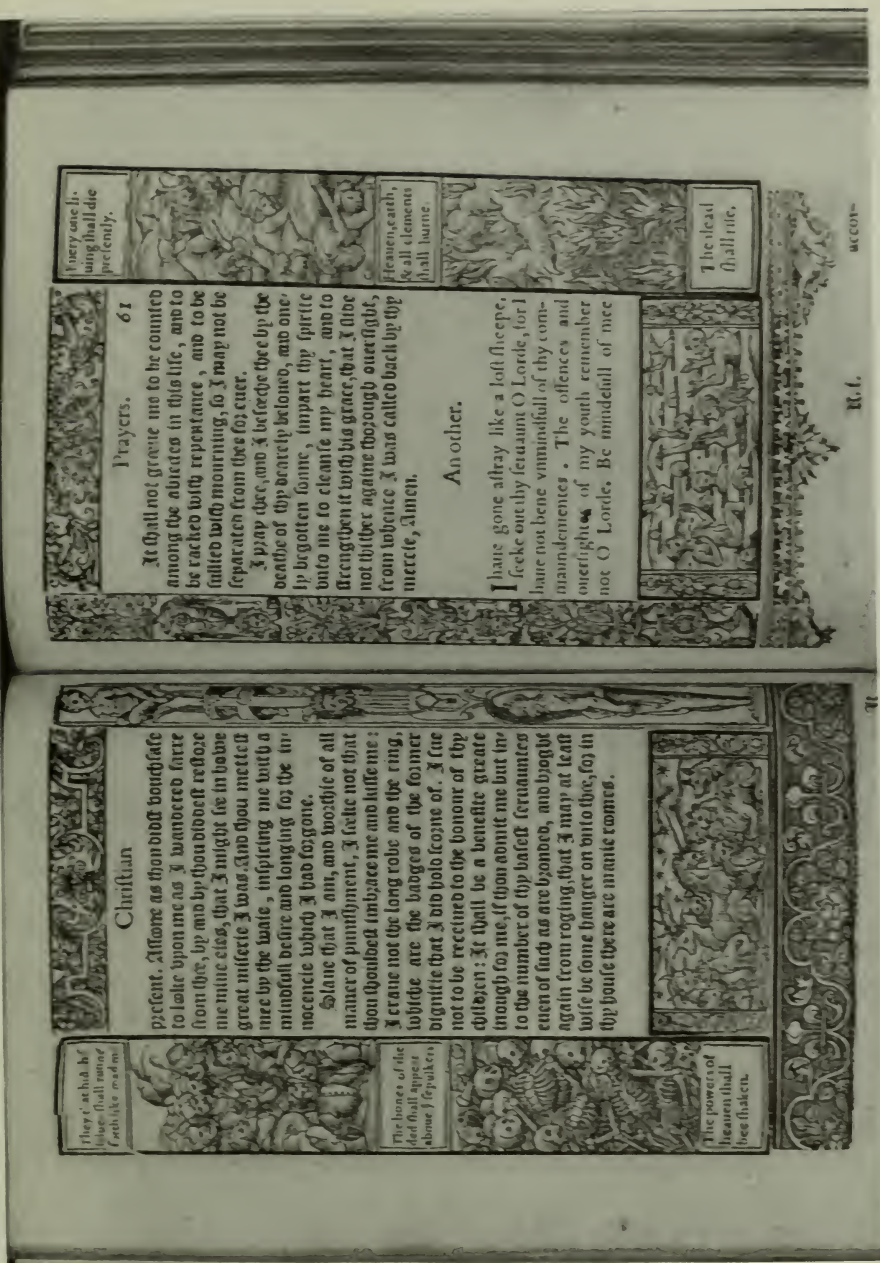


Fig. 4.29. Apocalypse. Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayer* (London, 1590), sigs. Q4v-R1. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

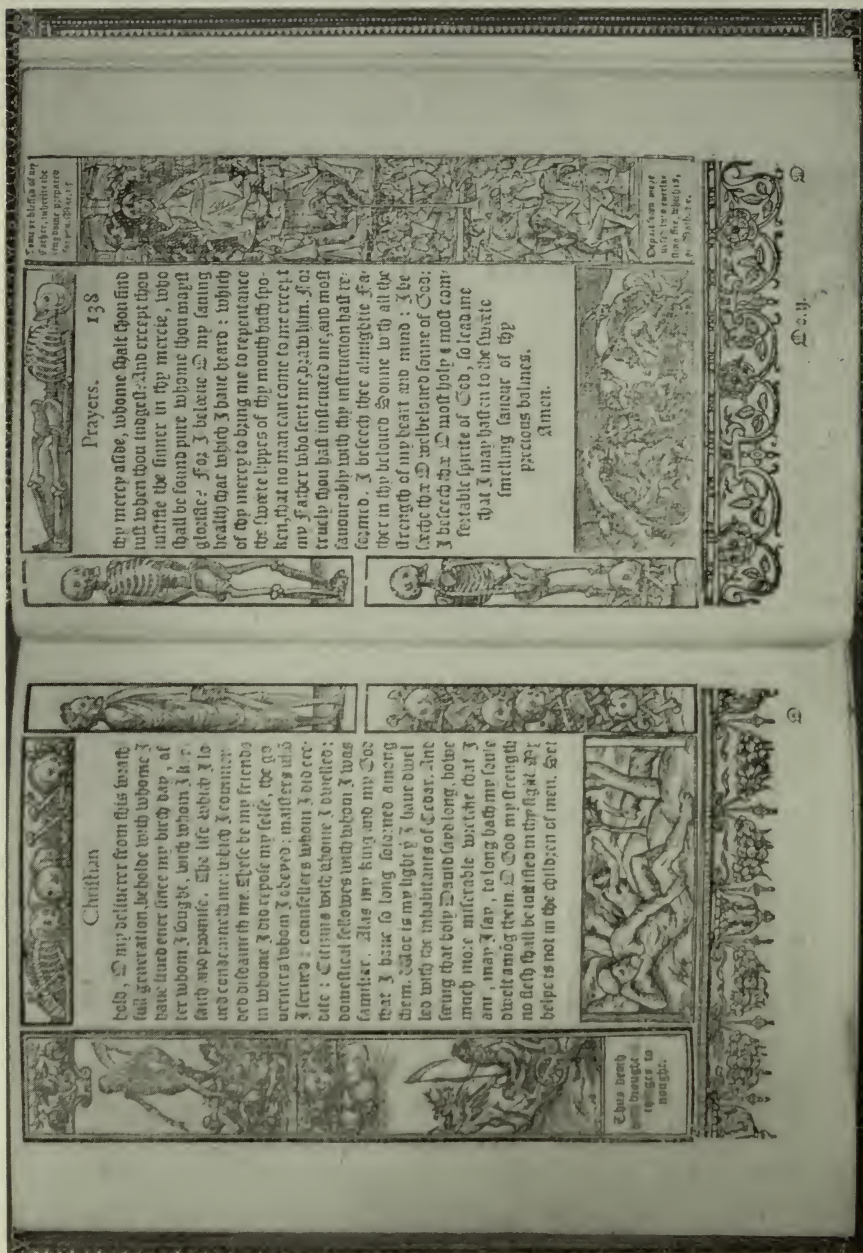


FIG. 4.30. Death's Victory (left) and The Final Trump (right). Richard Day, *The Booke of Christian Prayers* (London, 1590), sigs. Oo1v-Oo2. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

intervenes between the fifth sequence, addressing the death of mankind, and the seventh, illustrating the Final Judgment and Redemption. Thus situated, it reminds the reader of the necessity, within the context of the divine plan, of his or her own death and dissolution. Further, he or she is made to look beyond death, toward his or her ultimate end—which, following the Final Judgment, is Eternal Life in Glory as described in Matthew 15: “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you” (Fig. 4.30). It is toward this end that the Christian reader is instructed to guide his or her life. The leftmost panels of the Day of Judgment show Death’s final conquest before its ultimate overthrow. “Thus Death hath brought all things to nought.” As was discussed in Chapter 2, Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, likewise gives us a split image of this victory won at a great cost: The plan for redemption is set in motion in Book III, and its image is glimpsed in Book XII.

The Dance of Death sequence occurs three times before the border sequence culminates in the Final Judgment. This is part of a deliberate printing plan, overseen first by John Daye and then by Richard Day. Once page layout was established, the visual format must have been judged successful because, as I have noted, it remained a distinctive feature of the text. In addition to making this text more attractive and marketable, the repetition of the scheme confronts the viewer with designated memory images time and again so that they will remain with him or her long after the book is closed.³² These images are made all the more memorable because, for all of the gruesome and grisly images of Death, the border illustrations draw on and reflect a humor based on self-parody. And, what is more, as was seen in the previous chapter, ingeniously included is Death’s visit to the Printer, which shows the termination of the men who made the book possible (see Fig. 2.4). By extension, this image also implies the ultimate end of the allegorical character of Death as well, which depends on men to make its presence in the world graphically “real.” As if mocking itself, the figure of Death here anticipates the implosion of its own sovereign power both to signify and to be signified by mortal artifice.

MACABRE REFLECTION, INGENIOUS REVERSAL, AND GRAPHIC INVERSION

Let us continue our inquiry into the graphic unconscious in the early modern period by charting some of its residual traces in maps of mortality and related images whose formal design, no less than the subjects depicted, arrests the spectator’s attention and catches his or her conscience. Among the devices to be considered are instances when the image of Death is given a privileged, although not necessarily a central, place. The effect of skewing



FIG. 4.31. *The Ambassadors*. Hans Holbein the younger (c. 1533). Photo provided by the National Gallery, London.

the perspective on representations of man's ultimate overturning in and as the face of death, far from removing the idea of death from our attention, heightens the power of those images to stimulate serious contemplation of them. Like death in the world, such allegorical representations of Death appear to come from nowhere and take us by surprise. They cause us to realize and acknowledge—with Everyman from the morality play—"O Death, thou comest upon me when I had thee least in mind."

Hans Holbein's double portrait, known as *The Ambassadors* (1533), self-consciously stages this surprise effect in an involved drama of emblems that maps out our mortality (Fig. 4.31).³³ Within this frame we can see copious references to and symbols of human vanity and transience: among them, a

lute with a broken string and a hymnbook open to *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Also included are scientific instruments on the top shelf (a celestial globe, cylindrical and polyhedral sundials, a torquetum, and two quadrants), which stand for, and are themselves expressions of, the advancement of human learning. Taken together, they comprise a visual text on our limitations in the face of death—and it is the face of death that we see hovering above the mosaic floor at the base of the table. As if this is not uncanny enough, the artist has given this symbolically charged icon its own shadow, thereby endowing it with the same mimetic principles of representation as those he lavished on the sitters and material objects. Clearly the misshaped figure is intended to disturb the tranquility of the moment and disrupt the easy harmony of the orderly composition, just as death interrupts our life in the world. To bring this shape into focus, the viewer physically must move to another vantage point and, in so doing, lose sight of the sumptuous images—seen now as so many worldly vanities.

The probable program for the original disposition of this painting has been reasonably reconstructed by Jurgis Baltrušaitis: The owner of the painting, Dintville (who is one of the men portrayed), had it placed in a vast room, opposite one door and near another, each corresponding to one of the two viewing points.³⁴ Situated in this way, as a stable and ludic aspect of the interior design of the Chateau de Polisy, the reconstruction of which was begun by Dintville in 1544, the painting set the stage—and served as a mnemonic backdrop—for a macabre drama.³⁵ As such, it gives us additional insight into those early modern forms of expression distinctive for their setting in play a dialogue between the real and the allegorical. Such simulacra of death offer a memorable way to read the world and our place in it, through which we discover that the real, ultimately, is known in terms of (and by virtue of) the allegorical. Baltrušaitis argues, and I concur, that,

[i]n arranging the sequence of two independent images, Holbein did not dissociate them. He conceived his *Vexierbild* in terms of a theatre, with a change of scene and decor as in a dramatic spectacle. The painting was to be hung following precise instructions: in order that the effect of its composition should be as intended, it had to be placed at the base of a wall, on a level with or slightly above the floor, which would seem to extend into the picture. (P. 104)

Although the two points implicit in viewing this work cannot be reconciled from a single point of reference in the world, they are both encoded in this complicated map of mortality. Just as a spectator would need to use two mirrors to catch a glimpse of his own back in order to get a composite view of his entire body, the anamorphic picture enables one to see his double in



FIG. 4.32. Memento mori portrait of a young man (front and back). Jacopo Ligozzi (sixteenth century).



FIG. 4.33. Memento mori portrait of a young woman (front and back). Jacopo Ligozzi (sixteenth century).

death and thus gain a composite view of his total being. Such devices make use of and go beyond simple emblems of *vanitas* or paintings in which a sitter contemplates a skull.³⁶ For above all else, these expressions of the graphic unconscious provide an experience that disorients and thereby disarms the viewer's comfortable and unreflective attitude toward traditional categories of the truth related to a simple and unmediated view of mimesis.

In line with this, many allegorical expressions of *vanitas* were pioneered and exhausted during the period—especially those images showing a sitter's reflection as a death's head.³⁷ A notable and more ingenious development of this motif was to use a portrait back to depict the death's head, perhaps because of the double meaning it conferred to the painting's other side. For example, in Ligozzi's *double portraits macabres*, the sitters are portrayed at the peak of their health, while the reverse of each painting shows their heads in death (Figs. 4.32 and 4.33). The "other side" of the painting reveals the "other side" of life and brings into view that part of oneself ordinarily hidden from sight. The grotesque heads are separated from their bodies, and their jaws are locked in *ricus*. This grimace, exaggerated through artifice, was a much beloved convention of the baroque, as was the word "sardonic," invented to describe it.³⁸ The effect of a mocking and insensate grimace is unsettling indeed. Thus the back panels of Ligozzi's paintings function both allegorically and visually as a "mirror of truth." The grotesque heads face the same direction as the sitters shown in health, which reinforces the idea that they are intended as mirror images. The theme of death as the mirror image, or double, of mortals is repeated visually through the inclusion of a mirror showing a second aspect of the woman's head in death. The face on the portrait back and the face reflected in the mirror doubly depict the fatal reversal of her health and beauty. Shown here as a woman's double, death is the reverse of life; and yet, as an intimate part of her being, it is inseparable from the object that bears her image.

So long as his patrons were interested in personal *memento mori* portraits, the painter could apply his craft to elicit a more immediate and chilling awareness of the doubled nature of man than could a standard portrait alone. Its effect depended on its jolting the viewer to recognize an image of himself in something that at first glance appeared alien. Alberto Veca has concluded that this sense of conceptual and stylistic assonance was exemplified by artists like Jan Swart, in the mature era of *vanitas* painting, especially on the back panels of triptychs and diptychs.³⁹ The left and right panels of the triptych shown in Figs. 4.34 and 4.35 illustrate our fallen condition and the hope for salvation. Thus, when the doors are open, we see the panorama of God's Judgment. We see not the mundane element of death but rather a mystical and allegorical encapsulation of human history. When the panels are closed, however, what comes into focus is an ingenious *trompe l'oeil* of a



FIG. 4.34. Judgment scene (front panel, *left*), attributed to Jan Swart. Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 4.35. Judgment scene (front panel, *right*), attributed to Jan Swart. Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 4.36. Skull (back panel, *left*), attributed to Jan Swart. Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

FIG. 4.37. Crossed bones (back panel, *right*), attributed to Jan Swart. Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

memento mori cabinet (Figs. 4.36 and 4.37). In this token we see our own face mirrored in death, a token of our own implied future passing away to death. Spanning both the left and right glassed-in doors of the trompe-l'oeil cabinet is the image of a text which translates: "In all you do, remember that you must die, and you will refrain from sinning." The message, conveyed through mnemonic emblems signifying *memento mori*, as well as through the written word and also ingenious visual play, remains before the gaze of one's inner eye once the cabinets have been opened to reveal the scenario of the Day of Judgment. The same eerie effect, at once admonitory and commemorative, which goes beyond the mere representation of emblems and sententiae, can be seen in the other key works of the early modern period as well. But before looking at another triptych and then at several other visual texts which partake of the same overlapping aesthetic and epistemological assumptions, let us add to our theoretical grounding by keeping in mind as well Jean Baudrillard's remarks about the effect of trompe l'oeil in general:

In trompe l'oeil objects are too much like the things they are: this close resemblance is like a second state, and their true relief, through this allegorical resemblance, through the diagonal light, is that of death. Death is often present in painting in the form of a narrative of representational theme, in the form of a *theatre* of shades or of spectres. Here death is what is most at stake, the very thing to which one accedes in the reversal of the perspectival system of representation. . . . In trompe-l'oeil it is never a matter of confusion with the real: what is important is the production of a simulacrum in full consciousness of the game and of the artifice by miming the third dimension, throwing doubt on the reality of that third dimension in miming and outdoing the effect of the real, throwing radical doubt on the principles of reality.⁴⁰

Baudrillard characterizes here a principle of reality that is made more complicated (but not undermined) by the use of ingenious artifice: Any truth to be discovered in and through art is grounded in mimesis. His characterization of the metaphysical basis of trompe l'oeil, and his ensuing critique of what is at stake in accepting and perpetuating (without due reflection) the dictum "truth through mimesis," can be used to shed some light on early modern understandings of the structure of the real as that which is based on a memory, or recollection, of "a truth" that had been apprehended previously but subsequently has come to take precedence over the commonplace reality seen before us. This same dynamic process, whereby one's view of the world is framed and directed by allegorical structures and symbolic matrices, we have detected in Milton's epic, no less than in Gourmont's Fool's Head World Map and Death's visit to the Printer in the *Booke of Christian Prayers*. For it is in and through the representations of the

commonplace, of the quotidian (in the case of Swart: the skull, the note, the cabinet), that we come to recognize what we would call "the real."⁴¹ Actual objects in the world pale in comparison—unless they are seen according to what we have been trained to recognize in their exemplary states of representation, which in the seventeenth century often meant the moralized and the allegorized significations that had come to be associated with those representations. Things found in the world could be seen to shimmer with the infused, spiritualized, meanings once those implications had been elaborated by emblematisers like Saubert.⁴² The aim of such object lessons, which treated the world as a universal and public manuscript (to borrow a phrase from Browne, and which will be discussed at length in the next chapter), was to assure that things in the world would not merely be but would be seen and would be apprehended in terms of what they could be said to represent—whether these representations were disseminated through mnemonic elements and anamorphisms which took their peculiar shapes and aims from various forms of cultural expression, ranging from sermons to maps to devotional diptychs. Walter Benjamin's view of baroque allegory gives us a way to discuss such expressions of the graphic unconscious. Allegory, he claimed, is like "a focal point from which to look at things"; it is "pre-eminently a kind of experience" arising "from an apprehension of the world as no longer permanent, as passing out of being."⁴³ Drawing on the examples discussed so far I would expand this definition to include not just a single focal point but a series of related focal points encoded in a complexly arranged work of art containing self-reflexive elements that ring out from the center toward the margins.

With this in mind, let us turn to the Braque triptych by Rogier van der Weyden (Fig. 4.38).⁴⁴ The trompe-l'oeil casing of red bricks frames the death's head as if in a niche, and the skull is supported by a broken brick. The lone brick has been interpreted as symbolizing ruin, whether of a building or a dynasty; all things of this world will, in the end, crumble to dust. So too does the skull prefigure the inevitable ruin of all individuals and of mankind. The sentence inscribed on the top and bottom of the brick border announces: "Mires vous ci orgueilleux et avers / Mon corps fu beaux ore est viande a [vers]" ("Look you who are so proud and greedy, / My once beautiful body now is meat for worms").⁴⁵ Painted as if etched in the stones of some *memento mori* monument, these words reach, as it were, from beyond the sepulcher. In its moral content as well as in its ingenious graphic expression of the theme, this complex design is at once a mirror and map of mortality. The same sense of compound artifice is explicitly discussed in Moore's verbal treatment of the theme, in terms that are at once admonitory, commemorative, and quite consciously designed to project the reader's consciousness into the "future anterior."

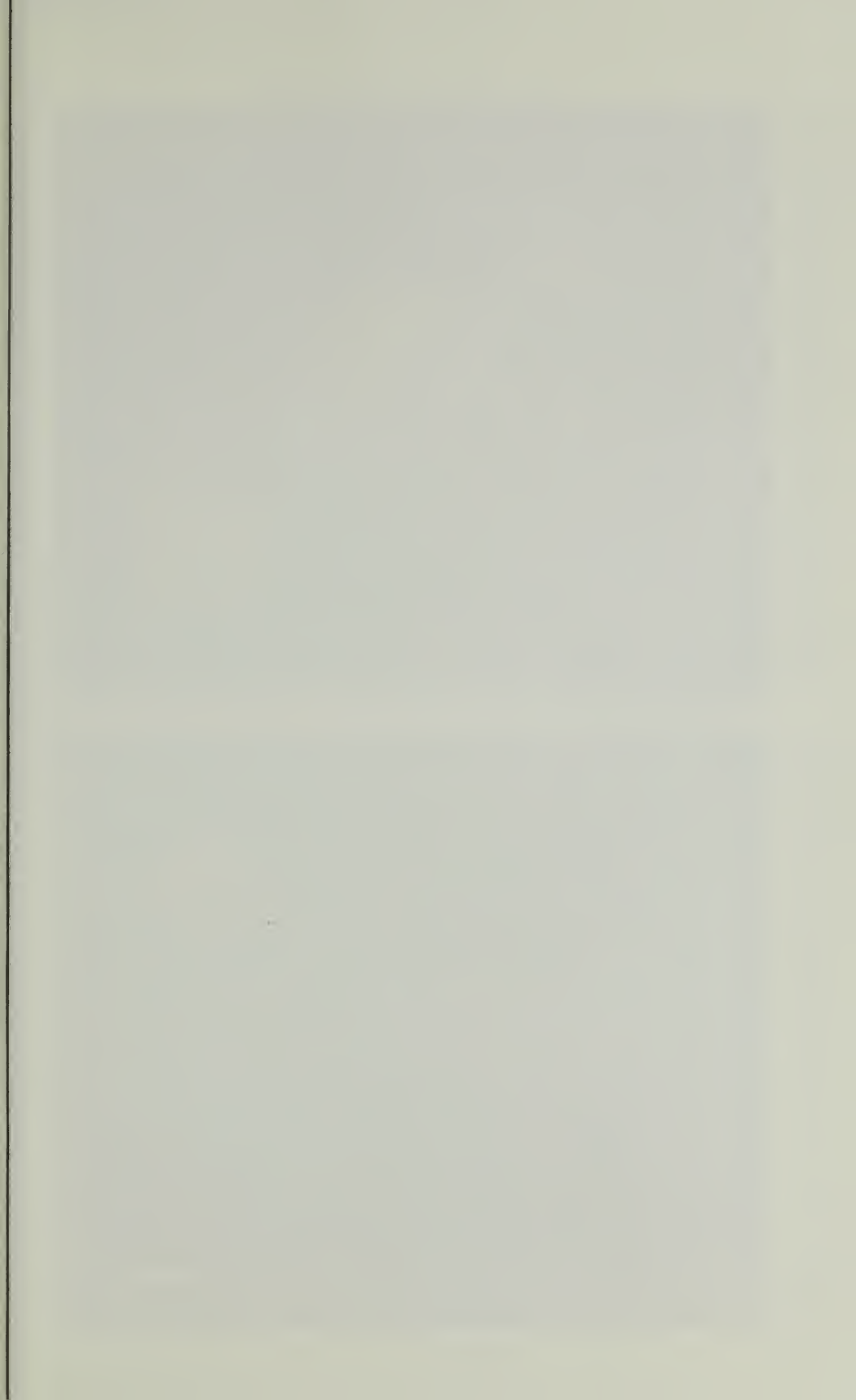




FIG. 4.38. Skull, from the Braque Triptych (back panel, *left*), by Rogier van der Weyden (c.1450). Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

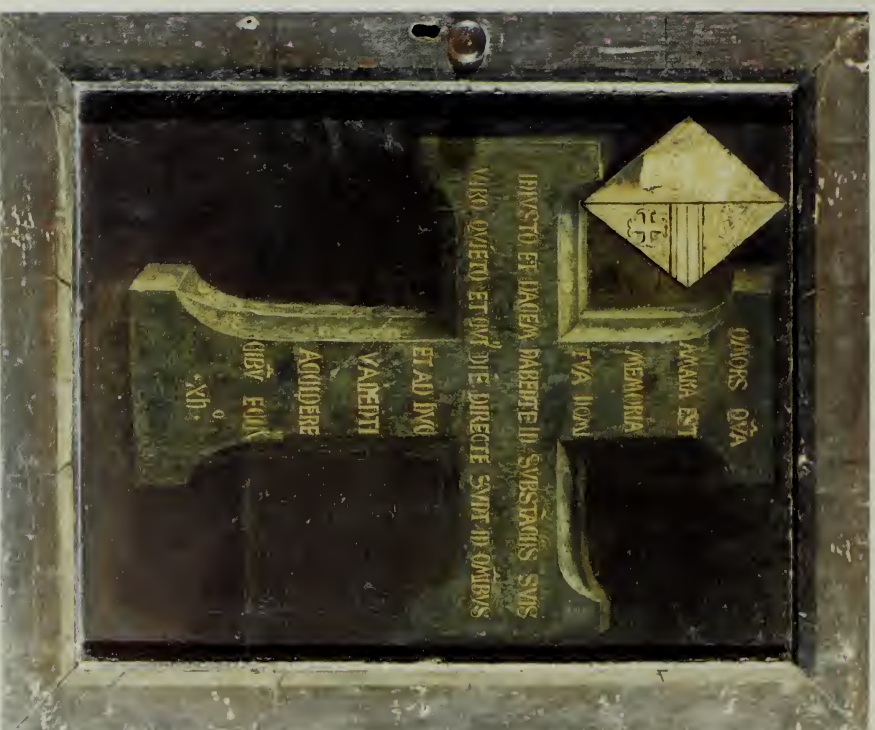


FIG. 4.39. Cross, from the Braque Triptych (back panel, *right*), by Rogier van der Weyden (c.1450). Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

So in our meates (as in a looking-glasse) we may learne our owne mortalitie: for let our put our hand in the dish, and do we take, but the food of a dead thing, which is either the flesh of beasts, or of birds, or of fishes, with such food we so long fill our bodies, untill they themselves be meate for wormes? All thus we see by experience, we feel it and we taste it daily, we see death (as it were) before our eyes: we feel it betwixt our teeth, and yet can we not cast our accompts, that we must die? (*Mappe*, sig. D4v, p. 40)

But van der Weyden's artifice is capable of more complex implications still, whereas Moore's depends exclusively on rhetorical evocation of the graphic unconscious. For in both theme and structure, the painted image of death is opposed by the right wing, which presents in equally stark terms the promise of salvation through the cross (Fig. 4.39).⁴⁶ In contrast to the brown, earthy tones of the death's head panel, the cross is painted in shades of green, suggesting regeneration. It provided comfort in an overdetermined, double sense: its use as an icon of salvation (symbolizing the possibility of spiritual, if not bodily, resurrection); and also the biblical sententia, painted as if etched into the stone cross, "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and hath prosperity in all things, yea unto him that is yet able to receive meat."⁴⁷ It is worth noting in passing that the sententiae on both back panels echo one another thematically according to their differing contexts and go so far as to conclude with the same wording of the term for "meat" (standing variously for corruptible flesh and also sustenance). The arrangement of the words in the shape of the cross supplies the resolution to the lament proposed by the sententiae. Though not a pattern poem, strictly speaking, it nonetheless draws on the same principles as this popular device, where the formal disposition of the words evoked thematic parallels to the content, whereby the entire device might the more easily and completely gain access into one's mind and find a place in the cabinet of memory.⁴⁸

Taken together, we can see then that the back panels use icons and marginal inscriptions to assert hope for the reunion of the faithful following the ruin and destruction of the world, according to Christian eschatology. The rich implications of the iconographically involved, yet theologically straightforward, reading of the entire triptych, can be appreciated only when all five painted surfaces are considered in tandem, verso and recto. For example, the front of the right side of the back panel (the one with the cross) depicts the penitent Mary Magdalene (Fig. 4.40). With her identifying icon of the jar of ointment and a descriptive sententia over her head, she stands for the hope for both redemption of sinners and resurrection. Facing toward her, the left panel, is John the Baptist, whose image is on the other side of



FIG. 4.40. Mary Magdalene, from the Braque Triptych (front, *right wing*), by Rogier van der Weyden (c.1450). Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 4.41. John the Baptist, from the Braque Triptych (front, *left wing*), by Rogier van der Weyden (c.1450). Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

the death's head panel (Fig. 4.41). He represents here those who came before Christ and who recognize the savior's power to take away the sins of the world.⁴⁹ Christ is placed at the center of the central panel of this rigorously symmetrical composition (Fig. 4.42).⁵⁰ As the main focus of this triptych (and of its back two panels), his placement reinforces the idea of Christ's

centrality in human history, and in the life of the individual. This theme is emphasized by the very design of the wings which, when opened, reveal death giving way to life. When this triptych is opened, the death's head on the left panel, framed by the biblical sentence reminding the viewer further of mortality, passes slowly from sight. For, as the face of death recedes from view, the face of Christ (symbolizing the promise of eternal life) takes its place. This involved text (both visual and textual) on the turning around of man's fallen state is ingeniously conveyed by using the reverse panels, which thus endows the whole work with a luminous meaning that radiates far beyond the traditional Christian and iconographic truths painted on the five wooden surfaces. What we have then is a fairly standard representation of the physical undoing of man and the subsequent undoing of this condition, but one which is conveyed in a way that directs the viewer to the structure of truth, which can be said to precede these images only by virtue of the fact that they have already been invented and made part of the store of viable memory images.

The same intellectual tendency can be explored further in another type of allegorical rendering of the image of death, one which brings into play most of the techniques and conventions discussed so far. It occurs in an illustration from *The London Hours of René of Anjou* (Fig. 4.43). At first glance this appears to be a fairly standard *memento mori* image, with all the conventional images of decay: Vermin gnaw a lithe cadaver whose ghastly smile is the result of facial decomposition. This was the same sort of image John Skelton described in "Lines upon a Dead Man's Head":

No man may him hide
 From Death hollow-eyed,
 With sinews wydered
 With bones shydered,
 With his worm-eaten maw,
 And his ghastly jaw
 Gasping aside,
 Naked of hide,
 Neither flesh nor fell.⁵¹

The motto Skelton tacked on at the end, "Myrres vous y" ("View yourself therein"), urges the reader to consider the poem in the same light as she would if it were a moral emblem—as a mirror wherein she can see herself.

The reader is likely to do the same with this image of Death in the *London Book of Hours*. The "word" at the foot of the page has a similar double implication, in that it coincides with the title of that section in the order of the prayers, which translates: "Here follows the Office of the Dead." As part of a prayer book, it is instrumental to the rite, or service, offered by the



FIG. 4.42. Christ, from the Braque Triptych (front, *center panel*), by Rogier van der Weyden (c.1450). Photograph provided by courtesy Musée du Louvre, Paris.

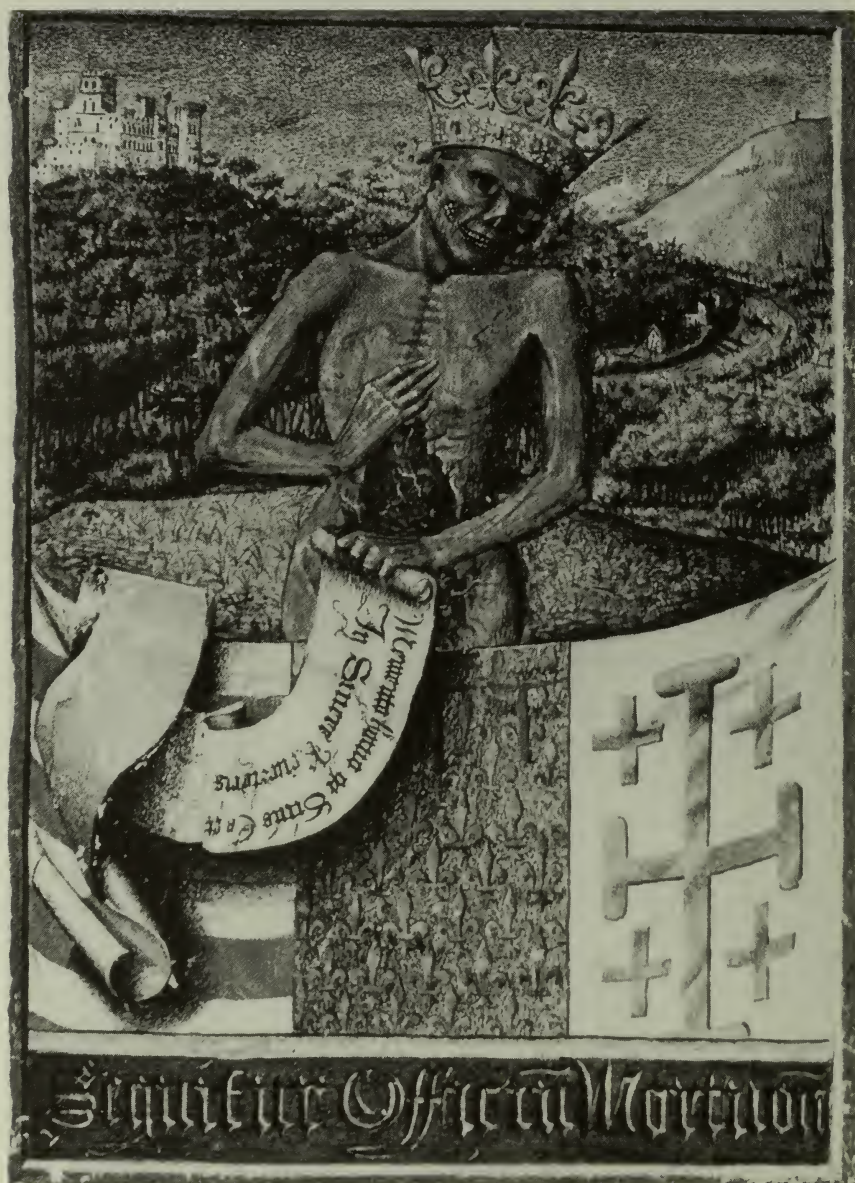


FIG. 4.43. Office of the Dead, *London Hours of René of Anjou* (early fifteenth century), fol. 53r. British Library, London.

living to the memory of the dead, and it also illustrates the commemorative service the dead provide for the living. The image of "the king as Death" is placed between the distant iconic view of Jerusalem and the family blazon of René in the front of the image. John Harthan has remarked that it is an allegorized self-portrait of René, as if he "has looked into a mirror and seen a reflection of himself as King-in-Death."⁵² This grotesque figure, seen as a mirror image of René of Anjou, stands out from other images of the king in his books of Hours where he is shown at the peak of his health and temporal power (Fig. 4.44). What is more, with "le-roi-mort" we are compelled to read across and beyond the image, according to a more graphically oriented sense as well, because the crowned corpse holds a scroll which unfurls, as if from the cavity of the king's body, at the exact center of the image. The position of the sententia has as much to communicate about the overall theme of the page as does the semantic content of those words. Rendered sideways and upside down, the scroll admonishes us to recall the biblical declaration: "Remember dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return." In this sense the words parallel, literally and emblematically, the theme of man's reversal, of the ultimate overturning of life—and, it is hoped, the turning from death to eternal life in Glory. The reader thus is compelled to see the message from another perspective (or in some way to compensate for this upside-down reading) if he or she is to apprehend what those words convey both on their own and in their transposed context.

A more literal rendering of this same theme of man's overturning which, through subtle artifice, causes the viewer to reassess prior conceptions of his or her place in the world appears on a page in an early modern *ars moriendi* (Fig. 4.45). Death carries a banner, and to see the words normally we must imagine that we are reading them from the other side—standing, as it were, within the background of the allegorical illustration. If we presume that the block was carved with the words "Ego sum" deliberately reversed, then we can see additional ironies in Death's declaration of its presence—which is to say, its being: "I am." But this textual fragment "I am" begins many important passages in the New Testament; fragments which, if carried out to their conclusions, give us a richer sense of the overturning of man as seen in the early modern period.

For example, the words can be used to situate Death as a messenger of God's plan for man's salvation, if we take the "Ego sum" to refer to Christ's words in John 11:25: "I am the resurrection, and the life."⁵³ What will these words (or any printed text for that matter) look like when we see them from the "other side" of life?⁵⁴ The banner metaphorically implies that Death positions us at the threshold leading from this life to eternal life. Death here is a grim and voiceless reaper whose banner speaks not for Death itself but for a higher power. This motif, and the concatenation of messengers (Christ

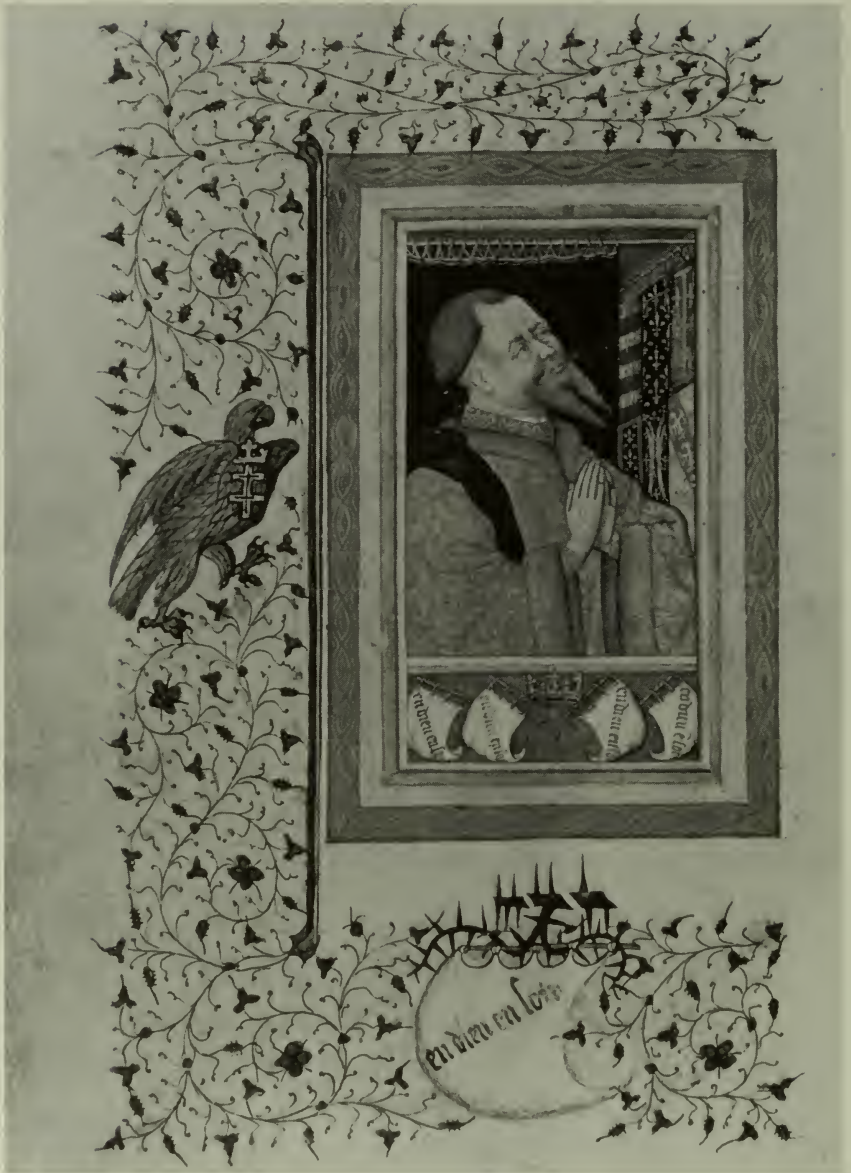


FIG. 4.44. René Anjou, *Paris Hours of René of Anjou* (c.1410), fol. 81v. Courtesy of the photographic services of the Bibliothèque Nationale.



FIG. 4.45. "Ego sum." Girolamo Savonarola, *Predica dell'arte del bene morire* (Florence, 1497).

on earth, and the allegorical figure of Death fulfilling the divine plan), applies as well if we take the "I am" to refer to Christ's words in John 7:28 and later in John 8:42: "I am from the Father of Heaven who has come down to you" (incidentally, words that hover above Christ's head in Fig. 4.42). As was discussed in terms of both Milton's characterization of Death (in Chapter 2) and "Triumph of Death," illustrated in the *Booke of Christian Prayers* (Fig. 4.30, *left margin*), Death can show no mercy. And as we saw with the parade of humility in the danse macabre, so too in this *ars moriendi* illustration: Death has no regard for degree; Death spares neither pope nor prince nor beggar. In their deaths, Death lives; and rightfully then can this allegorical character proclaim "I am."

But we cannot leave this image without noticing the profound comment on early modern subjectivity set in play here; and so I would reflect on it and, in the process, set the scene for the final section of this chapter.⁵⁵ The constitution of a subject who can claim for himself "being in the world" implies that his knowledge of his being, like his very being itself, is a product of artifice; he relies on language to declare his presence and to affirm that he is. The mediated act of proclaiming "I am" (especially when, as here, the words are written as if spoken) also implies an audience capable of making sense of those words as delivered. Thus the pronouncement "Ego Sum" is "heard" both as an echo of (biblical) words spoken by others and, in their very delivery, as a defining trait of one's own being. In the act of saying that one is, one literally bespeaks his presence; further, through words—and hence in imitation of God's creating through speaking in Genesis—the subject thereby calls himself into a special way of being in the world. Indeed, the world thus brought into being with the subject's act of saying "Ego Sum" (which is not just any saying, but a self-conscious and self-generative kind of saying), the world that is shown by and through it, is, like a mirror, framed by a larger context still—one that goes beyond the presence of the artifice that evoked it but which can be expressed self-reflexively and through conventions of mortal artifice.

LUDIC AND SPECULAR ASPECTS OF DEATH UNMASKED

The image of Death as the Leveler, heedless of distinctions in gender, class, or station, was so common in the early modern period that it hardly requires further commentary. And yet it is because of its frequency that we need to attend more closely to what underlies the repetition of this commonplace theme; for, perhaps because of the rhetorical and graphic redundancy, we tend to overlook the fundamental structure of truth (or at least that which is

perceived as such) that led to its becoming a catchword in the first place. John Moore gave voice to the commonplace when he compared death to "the lodge of all estates. All must dye without distinction: wee came by the wombe, and wee must go by the grave" (*Mappe*, sig. D2, p. 35). Prior to this, he had observed that Death was "the heape whereupon the liues of all men shall be powred: where Kings and Consellers are, great and small, captives and soldiers, bond and free." As was discussed in Chapter 2, at the core of this commonplace is a potentially ironic twisting away from the conventional application of allegory. Further, by looking more closely still we can locate a decisive moment in the early seventeenth century when allegory can be seen to turn about and twist free from the dialectical relation of memory and oblivion and thus to herald the precession of simulacra. With this in mind, let us return to Strode for a comparison of men to heaped-together chess pieces to get our bearings once more. Let us view his use of this conceit with an eye toward its tropological and not simply its allegorical sense.

Unlike the later, romantic treatment of this allegorical configuration (and it is a melodramatic, Bergmanesque scene: a man sits across a chess table from a menacing, hooded figure, playing for all he is worth—his life), Strode does not position Death as an adversary, or even as a divine messenger. Instead, Death is but the custodian of tokens.

For while the play indureth there is great difference in the men, greater respect had to some then to others; but when the Check-mate is giuen, & play ended, then the men are tumbled together, and put into the bag, from whence they were taken out, & the lesser men uppermost many times there being no difference. And so it is in the world. There is great difference in men, & greater respect had to some then to others (as it is meet to be) but when death commeth (as surely it will come to all sorts) then there will be no such difference in the graue, neither doth Death know any such difference for he spareth none.⁵⁶

Another version of this commonplace image appears, among other places, in the song of Death's herald, portrayed as a Moor, in popular English versions of *The Kalender of Shepeberdes*.

Ho, ho betyme, or that it be to late
Cease whyle ye haue space, and portunate
Leue your follyes, or death make you checkmate.⁵⁷

John Skelton used a more graphic variation on this motif in his tumbling verse, "Lines upon a Dead Man's Head":

Our days be dated
To be checkmated
With draughtes of death
Stopping our breath. (Lines 29–32)

This description is more arresting and violent than in Strode's words or those of the "horner" (as he is called) in *The Kalender of Shepeherdes*, for in Skelton's image we are to visualize ourselves being suffocated with the very tokens—the very symbols of simulacra—we move across the playing surface. The same comparison is used by Cervantes, but with an added level of parody, for he puts it in the mouth of Sancho Panza. It occurs at a curious juncture in Book II of *Don Quixote* when Sancho is beginning to sound more like his master, even as Don Quixote is beginning to temper his words, more and more, with surges of reason. Sancho pursues a comparison about the game of chess, "during which every piece maintains a particular station and character; but, when the game is over, they are all mixed, jumbled and shaken together in a bag, like mortals in the grave" (p. 485).⁵⁸

This passage follows from, and is linked thematically to, Don Quixote's lauding of players, which leads him to muse how life is itself a play in which Death strips every character of the robes "that distinguish their stations, and they become all equal in the grave" (p. 485). At once with banality and urbanity, Don Quixote gives voice to the principles of Donatus, when he recalls that players

are all instruments of great benefit to the commonwealth, holding, as it were, a looking-glass always before us, in which we see naturally delineated all the actions of life; and no other comparison whatever represents to us more lively, what we are, and what we ought to be, than comedy and her attendants.

He then moralizes his statement about theatrical specularity:

The very same thing . . . happens in the comedy and commerce of this world, where one meets with some people playing the parts of emperors, others in the characters of popes, and finally, all the different personages that can be introduced in a comedy; but, when the play is done, that is, when life is at an end, death strips them of their robes that distinguish their stations, and they become all equal in the grave.

The maxims exchanged by Don Quixote and Sancho are so shopworn as to sound foolish rather than sententious; however, this reflective interval takes on added significance when we recall its place in the adventures of this knight who read too much and who sought to ground his actions in chivalric fictions.⁵⁹ It occurs in the chapter immediately before the first encounter

with the "Knight of Mirroures" (the Man of Letters, in disguise), who wants to make Don Quixote see himself as he "really is," thus to lead him away from the world of illusions and toward what is "real"—a movement that results in Don Quixote's decision to abandon his noble quest and, ultimately, to give up life itself. Further, the episode comes immediately after Don Quixote and Sancho encounter a troupe of players who travel in their costumes so as to be able to perform "The Parliament of Death," part of a Corpus Christi cycle, as soon as they get to the next village. "The first figure that struck the eyes of Don Quixote, was death itself in human shape" (p. 480). Although initially curious and perhaps frightened,

Don Quixote . . . placed himself before the [wagon], and with a loud and threatening voice, pronounced, "Driver, coachman, devil, or whatsoever thou art, tell me, strait, wither thou are going, and who those people are whom thou drivest in that carriage, which looks more like Charon's bark than any modern vehicle."

But of course, after all, it is a modern vehicle; and it is so in a double sense. First, in the world of *Don Quixote*, it is a wagon and not the classical, antique "bark." Second, in the realm of my theoretical speculations, the wagon is the metaphorical conveyance, which is to say the means for transporting the allegorical image of death away from the Renaissance and into the modern world. Both literally and allegorically, the modern vehicle, which only momentarily can be confused with its poetic archetype, is a figure of transportation—as the etymology of *metaphor* implies: It transports an image based on something in the material world across the channel of meaning (beyond the River Lethe, forgetfulness) to the shore of allegory, and thence from allegory to a version of the real that can be deciphered and reconstituted through artifice. For, as Don Quixote announced after the man playing Death had described the true condition of their traveling show, "When I first descried the wagon, I thought myself on the eve of some great adventure; and now I affirm, that a man ought to examine things with more senses than one, before he can be assured of the truth."

The seed of modernity sprouts here, appropriately enough, through the character of Don Quixote whose words and adventures are grounded in patterns of earlier literary conventions—thus making of this episode a powerful (although convoluted) instance in literary history which signals the precession of simulacra. What is more, Don Quixote lets the troupe pass on (and we would not be incorrect to let the word "troupe" slide into "trope" because of the metaphorical turning that is implied in the passage). He lets them pass because, as he claims, from his childhood he has been "a great lover of masques and theatrical representations." Where is the distracted Don Qui-

xote now? Why does he no longer translate the commonplace into the extraordinary? Where are all of his giants and magicians now? What is it about flesh-and-blood spectacles that enables Don Quixote to see them for what they are, as artifice?

This moment, like the passage when he praised poetry above all of the humanist pursuits, and like his discussion of the players, demonstrates subtle insight into Cervantes's character's understanding of mortal artifice. In his account of the properties of the players in the wagon containing the "Parliament of Death," he praises their insistence on not concealing the seams between mimetic activity and the reality it represents:

[T]he ornaments of comedy ought not to be rich and real, but feigned and artificial, like the drama itself, which I would have thee respect Sancho, and receive into favour, together with those who represent and compose it. (P. 484)

In moments like these, when Don Quixote speaks as a man of reason who delights in the ludic operations of theatrical spectacles, Cervantes needs to interject another embodiment, a simulacrum, of folly, as a counterfoil. And so it happens with the "Parliament of Death" episode: "one of the company, dressed in motley, hung around with a number of morrice-bells, with a pole in his hand, to the end of which were tied three blown ox-bladders" (p. 481).

The intrusive presence of the trickster leads to chaos: Don Quixote is thrown from his horse, Sancho leaps from his mule, Dapple, upon which the "bladder-shaking devil" has jumped and proceeds to "beat her." The trickster (*bogi gangi* in Spanish) plays a curious role in the text, just as he does in the troupe of which he is member. In the text he functions as what his costume announces about him for "The Parliament of Death": an interlude—he amuses the audience between episodes. And yet this frivolous character, the embodiment of the interlude, in playing out his part in Cervantes's text, initiates a turning away from the often inadvertent cruelty that previously had marked the text toward a new level of deliberate, apparently unmotivated violence. This tense textual moment is emblematic of the passing away of personification allegory as it was understood in the Renaissance, as a turning toward another incarnation of the face of allegory. No longer able to read the world as a "new adventure," as a moral allegory or parabolic map of manners, we are left with—with what? With the real? Yes, but the structure of the real here is conveyed allegorically. After all, this textual interlude occurs within the frame of Cervantes's fiction, itself contextualized as a transcription and translation from an Arabian scribe—a self-referential framing mechanism played out in the third chapter of Book II. When Don Quixote learns of this text, he says: "'Tis true, then that there is a

history of me." Sampson, the Man of Letters, replies, "So true, signor, that to my certain knowledge, there are twelve thousand volumes of it, this day, in print. . . . there is scarce a nation or language into which it will not be translated" (p. 440). Although this is good textual fun on Cervantes's part (and perhaps wishful thinking), the passage also can be read as an early modern instance of the prefiguration of what Baudrillard calls the precession of simulacra.

What then are we to conclude from all that has been suggested in this chapter about the maps and metaphors, about theater and chess, and, more encompassingly, about the real and the allegorical in the early modern period? First, an obvious similarity: both the staged spectacle and chess make use of tokens (or simulacra) to designate people who themselves stand for certain values or points of reference. Next, we have access to a more complex comparison: Both theater and chess, like map and metaphor, call forth and depend on a principle of truth by analogy, one that is predicated on a faith in mimesis which enables the transference of meaning beyond the paradigm, "the world provides the model, art imitates." The symbolic registers of thought and language in the seventeenth century often supplied the essential nature of what was taken to be the real, and it did so by giving to it—which is to say by constructing for it—a history. For example, through Don Quixote's reference to the comedy which contains emperors, popes, and fools, as through Sancho's description of the game of chess, we can detect a dynamic movement between using those conventions associated with political relations to describe a ludic cultural phenomenon, and elements of the game becoming part of the accepted, even commonplace, pattern to describe social relations in the world. And yet, for all of its playfulness, both chess pieces and comedians—as simulacra—describe the melancholy truth of the lack of difference between men and women of all social stations in the face of death. As was suggested in the previous chapters, in order for this expression of *memento mori* to make sense, the zones of power and the rigid definitions of hierarchies had to be unquestionably in place—only so that they could then be "disregarded" according to the rules of the game and, ultimately, by the allegorical figure of Death.

Some maps, like language itself, at best can mark out what we cannot possess, what we can never truly dominate or even inhabit. And so it is with Death, before it is subjected to the mechanisms of personification, before the precession of simulacra. As Montaigne commented, we are already that which we strive to map and yet can only see this because of, and insofar as we embody, what is being mapped.

All the time you live, you steale it from death: it is at her charge. The continuall worke of your life, is to contrive death; you are in death, during the

time you continue in life: for, you are after death, when you are no longer living. Or if you had rather have it so, you are dead after life: but during life, you are still dying. . . . [C]hildren are afraid of their friends, when they see them masked; and so are we: The maske must be taken from things, as from men, which being removed, we shall finde nothing hid under it, but the very same death, that a seely varlet, or a simple maid-servant, did lately suffer without amazement or feare. (*Essayes*, I.19)

Death is collapsed within our very being, and yet its image is mapped onto each of us as we age; thus the urge to locate death somewhere outside ourselves, in personifications and allegories, on the margins of our being, at the periphery of our vision.

Finally, then, to return to the sovereign map and the vast terrain of our parable: it is not simply that we are left with the map once the territory has eroded over time. The map makes us aware of and (through artifice) gives to us (by making present, symbolically) the terrain; the map relates the territory's prior presence, and it presages its implied future absence. Although metaphor—as a vehicle—may well “carry death” and may pass away as a result of conveying its content, in the case of our parable of the emperor's map, as it applies to allegory from Holbein to Cervantes, the vanishing terrain continues to exist, as a structure of the real, by virtue of the map.

As we turn now to leave this chapter and set our sights on an Interlude just over the ridge, it is fitting that we look back to the opening of this chapter and to John Moore's turn of phrase from the *Mappe of Mans Mortalitie*. Death, we are counseled, is sent to man as a “hackney to carry and convey him from earth to heaven, from pain to pleasure, from misery, vexation, grief, and woe to endlesse mirth, melody, and joyes unspeakable with God for ever.” Indeed, we have traveled much ground so far; so let us rest a while, and seek mirth.

Interlude

Janus and the Ring

I should define as baroque that style which deliberately exhausts (or tries to exhaust) all its possibilities and which borders on its own parody.

JORGE LUIS BORGES, *Universal History of Infamy*

Let us pause here, at the base of the fourth finger, before we move on to the fifth and final chapter (see Appendix). Let us reflect a while under the shadow of Janus, whom I designate now as embodying the Renaissance aesthetic of anamnesis. After all, he looks back and remembers what has gone before and looks forward to assess what is to come. Let us therefore call forth Janus, patron of gardens and protector of thresholds (Fig. I.1). But on second thought, it is not Janus I want but what he is capable of symbolizing—including the process of symbolization itself. For similar reasons Charles Sorel, who clearly was familiar with if not indebted to Lucian's popular parody of "The Banquet of the Gods," called upon Janus:

This tumult being appeased, they look'd towards *Ianus*, who being quite drunk was grown very insolent. When supper began, he had put on his *Serpent* that bites its own tail, like a Scarf; but now he had taken it off to bestow it about the ears of those were near him; and he would needs go play the Tumbler, and make hey-passes as if it had play the Tumbler, and make hey-passes as if it had been through a hoop, had they not hindered him. For want of this diversion, he beset himself to prattle with both his tongues together. His two mouths abus'd one another, contradicted and belyed one another; and presently becoming friends again, defied one another to drink. If the one laugh'd, the other cry'd; and if he promised any thing with the mouth before, he perform'd never the more for that, for that behind recall'd it,

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saying it had not consented thereto. Besides, the face he had backward was the more ancient; and to seem knowing, it would never be of the same opinion with the other, which was its younger brother.¹

This portrait of Janus, irrespective of whatever else can be said about it, is funny. But let us look closer. Disposed to doubleness, Janus embodies melancholy as well as mirth, old age and youth, Memory and Imagination. Where then are we to find the third component, Reason? Reason is noticeably absent from this portrait—or rather, it is implicit throughout. Janus's activities are judged as being silly only when seen against the rigid measuring rod of reasonableness. And it is precisely this holiday from reason that licenses his using the serpent in ways other than those conventionally attributed to this immemorial emblem of perpetuity. Thus released from being a fixed icon, the serpent biting its tail becomes a variable prop in Sorel's satirical interlude in the adventures of the quixotic Louis, who has taken on the name of Lysis and fancies that he lives in the world of a pastoral romance.

The double duty ascribed to the hieroglyphic of the circle-serpent, like the doubleness of Louis/Lysis, and like the two-faced figure of Janus himself, is also that which marks the condition of our mortality as being a ludic mirror image of ourselves in and as the figure of Death. To set the stage for the final chapter, then, let us look more closely at the transformations of the circle-serpent during the rowdy Banquet of the Gods, bearing in mind the Renaissance commonplace that the ancient Egyptians, "at their Feasts, used to present a Death-head at their second course" so that "it in minde might put them what they were."²

Traditionally, the circle-serpent symbolized eternity; but, in the hands of the drunken double-faced deity, it assumes the more material role of a scarf; and finally, in a different, more playful context still, we are made to visualize it as a hoop, or large ring suitable for tossing, in rustic sports. Thus this emblem is taken successively from the highest of literary genres to the lowest; from the heroic register to the georgic, to the pastoral. It is moved in sequence from its noble context to what, in the Renaissance, was considered the lowest.³ But it is placed even lower still, because this episode occurs in the larger context of a parody of the pastoral.

At the risk again of restating what may seem obvious, let me clarify several key points. What Sorel does with Janus's serpent, in another setting could have been done just as easily with the death's head or tomb memorial (perhaps with the motto "*Et in Arcadia Ego*"). Emblems, whether of eternity or signifying *memento mori*, take on different implications depending on the context and their proximity to other icons (as we saw in Chapter 1). And



THE former parte, nowe paste, of this my booke,
 The seconde parte in order doth insue:
 Which, I beginne with IANVS double looke,
 That as hee sees, the yeares both oulde, and newe,
 So, with regarde, I may these partes behoulde,
 Perusinge ofte, the newe, and ecke the oulde.

FIG. I.1. "Respice, & prospice." Geoffrey Whitney, *Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586), sig. O2v. Photo courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

yet, the comic Banquet of the Gods establishes a very different ambience from that evoked by a death's head. Using a skull as a carousing cup, or as a ball in an athletic contest, probably would elicit frisson, if not horror. For example, the skull of the vanquished king in Thomas Middleton's *The Witch*, when inverted and made into a carousing cup—and thus a memorial token of the vanquisher's scorn and dominance—serves to renew the cycle of

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violence and death that is played out in the ensuing drama. Thomas Browne contextualized this chilling episode drawn from history in a section of his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* titled "Of some Relations whose truth we fear":⁴

It is an unsufferable affront to filiall piety, and a deep discouragement unto the expectation of all aged Parents, who shall but read the story of the barbarous Queen; who after she had beheld her royall Parent's ruin, lay yet in the arms of his assissine, and caroused with him in the skull of her father. (*P.E.* 7.19)

But in Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* 32, the scene of the chastened lady who comes from behind the tapestry every evening to drink to her husband's health from a cup fashioned of the skull of her former lover evokes a much more complicated response.

Among the other things to keep in mind about Sorel's festive interlude, as we take leave of the place of this Interlude, is that Janus here illustrates and embodies both the jocund and the serious sides of symbol making and symbol reading in the early modern period. With Janus as our patron, let us proceed in Chapter 5 to continue looking at (and from) several perspectives, as we consider the melancholy implications of Browne's contention that man is

that great and true *Amphibium*, whose nature is disposed to live not onely like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds; for though there bee but one [world] to sense, there are two to reason; the one visible; the other invisible.⁵

FIVE



Transfiguring Hieroglyphics

Browne and Heidegger

During the early modern period metaphor, like death, often was conveyed in the figure of a vehicle. The metaphorical status of metaphor itself (and of metaphor's correspondent relation to death, as both a figure and a process) came to occupy a central place in Sir Thomas Browne's contemplations and compositions. The special treatment of metaphor in Browne's work is consistent with his mode of inquiry, which was to record his approach to gaining knowledge of a subject, even (and especially) if that subject was outside the scope of human reason and discursive language. As was often the case with writers concerned with such convoluted turns of thought, the structure of his discourse was integral to conveying the extent of his theme. His method of composition (and it is exemplary in this regard) was grounded in what might be termed an aesthetic of anamnesis; for, like other essayists of the period, he ransacked the storehouse of memory (both his own and that of his cultural traditions). What distinguishes Browne from other writers who structured their ideas about subjects in terms of copiousness and *accumulatio* is that he sought not so much to deploy and expand the mnememes of his literary and lived experience (the exempla, similitudes, and sententiae discussed in Chapter 3) as to transfigure and preserve them in another (and equally true) form by dislodging them from their conventional and ossified moorings. The result was a mnemonic map of mortality in which our once familiar landmarks are treated naturally, artificially, and mystically. Browne sought to reveal a composite emblematic mirror of how the world is seen (in phenomenal terms), figured (in metaphorical terms), and projected (in spiritual terms) so that things of this world could be apprehended "truthfully"—and a principal element in this

process, he discloses, is the recognition of the limits and liberties of those various enabling perspectival operations.

During the early modern period, the aesthetic of anamnesis in and of itself did not represent or reveal any particular truth; rather, it brought to prominence the structure of truth more generally which appeared under the cover of many names and practices. In Chapter 4, I introduced an insight suggested by Mircea Eliade, which now can be used to help us sort out the practical applications of the Renaissance aesthetic of anamnesis: "it is not so much the memory of specific things and events that are to be remembered, but rather the memory of truth, which is to say of the structures of the real."¹ In Browne's day, the structures of what passed for the real constituted the trace between what was to be remembered from the past and what was to be remembered about the future. This is especially evident in the grand and most ambitious of the English endeavors to clarify and further the available discourses of knowledge. For example, the maxim "Knowledge is remembrance," fundamental to the Platonic theory of knowledge, served as both the tropological and the philosophical point of departure for Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*.²

With the following praise for King James, Bacon begins the project which he hoped would transform both the map of learning of his day and, along with it, the methods used to explore its grounding:

I have often thought that of all the persons living that I have known, your Majesty were the best instance to make a man of Plato's opinion, that all knowledge is but remembrance, and that the mind of man by nature knoweth all things, and hath but her own native and original notions (which by the strangeness and darkness of this tabernacle of the body are sequestered) again revived and restored. (*Works*, 6:88)

Bacon elaborated on this theme more philosophically in the third (and last) version of his *Essays*; in fact, he launches the essay that caps off his project with a pair of quotations that sum up the Renaissance aesthetic of anamnesis:

Salomon saith, "There is no new thing upon the earth." So that as Plato had an imagination, "That all knowledge was but remembrance"; so Salomon giveth his sentence "That all novelty is but oblivion." Whereby you may see that the river of Lethe runneth as well above ground as below. (*Works*, 12:273)

This passage both exemplifies the literary techniques I would examine in this chapter and alludes to a special kind of remembering (in the face of the vicissitude of things) that was familiar to and addressed by other Renais-

sance essayists, most notably Montaigne and Browne. This essay opens with sentences ascribed to men who by the early modern period had come to personify, and who had become the voices of, biblical wisdom and classical learning respectively. Bacon here cites these authoritative sources concerning the impossibility of novelty, and yet he seems to have remained aware of a lingering irony in his using the words of others to say that nothing new can be said.

The precept of anamnesis also gave Thomas Browne an apt way to introduce his inquiry into questionable matters and the uncritical acceptance of ideas and beliefs in his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646). "Would truth dispense, we could be content, with Plato, that knowledge were but Remembrance; that Intellectuall acquisition were but Reminiscentiall evocation" (*P.E.*, p. 3).³ But, as Browne is at great pains to show in his *Enquiries in to Vulgar and Common Errors*, we cannot dispense with demonstrable, physically grounded truths borne out by experience and experimentation. And yet, still, the metaphorical quality of anamnestic principles animates his approach both to his chosen themes and to his literary style. Moreover, his prose inaugurates a method of self-discovery that acknowledges that what is "discovered," as the etymology implies, is an unconcealing of what has been covered over by the intellectual debris of the centuries. He would concur with Bacon's lament in the *Instauratio Magna* that time is like a river, and all that is light and insubstantial has buoyed up to the surface and floated down to us, while everything of weight and substance has sunk to the bottom. In his effort to bring to our attention, and to salvage, those sunken treasures of the intellect, Browne acknowledged that some things could be metaphorically and literally true at the same time. This sets him apart both from his contemporaries who accepted mystical and typological interpretations to the exclusion of more mundane and temporal ones and from those who were more empirically sophisticated and who rejected allegorical interpretations of the Book of Nature.

The double and seemingly contradictory set of perspectives advocated by Browne (allowing for the possibility of metaphorical and empirical truth operating concurrently) resulted from his interest in discovering the appropriate ways to read each of the Two Books of God.⁴ The first is the Bible, the revealed Word of God, best approached through theology. The other is Nature, the trace of God's presence in his creation, best approached through natural philosophy. While trying to uncover the principles behind the subjects of his scrutiny, Browne discovered it was truth's nature always to be, at least, double. In *Religio Medici* (1642) he declared:

THUS there are two bookes from whence I collect my Divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universall and publik

Manuscript, that lies expans'd unto the eyes of all; those that never saw him in the one, have discovered him in the other. (R.M. 1.16, pp. 24–25)

The relation between these two ways of acquiring knowledge, between studying spiritual matters and natural phenomena, provided the point of departure for Browne's literary output. As will be explored in detail in this chapter, Browne called attention to the double nature of man by writing on dualistic topics in a way that mirrored what he understood to be the twofold nature of knowledge. Again and again his essays return to the theme that his chief mental and spiritual recreation came from turning over in his mind divine paradoxes. And yet he was not overcome by reported or apparent paradoxes unless, after first applying his reason to its fullest extent, they still remained unresolved. This aspect of his dedication to interpreting divine mysteries is especially pronounced in his encyclopedic *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, which repeatedly demonstrates how many false mysteries, or vulgar errors, can be resolved by judicious observation and reasoning. And yet, from the first of his prose tracts, printed when he was in his mid forties, until those posthumously published, his essays reflect a keen awareness that metaphor formed the visible part of his discourse and conveyed thoughts of the invisible. As Frank Huntley has noted, he used metaphors in *Religio Medici* in at least three ways: simply to evoke an idea, to join the visible and the invisible worlds, and to forge symbolic rather than logical links.⁵ In this chapter I focus on the second of these uses of metaphor to further our inquiry into its limits and liberties in the early modern period—especially as pertains to how the context of its application was itself used to figure something that was acknowledged as being beyond the reach of language and images.

Browne's ideas about representation, and about what passed as mortal truths, cannot be discussed without taking into account his method of expressing them. For Browne the truth of representation resided in its capacity simultaneously to reveal and conceal the underlying structure of objects no less than of ideas themselves. His mnemonically oriented principle of composition facilitated his coming to recognize various expressions of this interplay between what is visible and what is invisible; his prose thus is concerned primarily with analyzing and representing just such an intellectual activity—which to Browne was at once an exercise of his highest reason and a mystical event.⁶

In Philosophy where truth seemes double-faced, there is no man more paradoxicall then my self; but in Divinity I love to keepe the road, and though not in an implicate, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheele of the Church, by which I move. . . . me thinkes there be not impossibilities enough in

Religion for an active faith; the deepest mysteries ours contains, have not only been illustrated, but maintained by syllogisme, and the rule of reason: I love to lose my selfe in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an *o altitudo*. 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved aenigma's and riddles of the Trinity, with Incarnation and Resurrection. (*R.M.* 1.6, 1.9, pp. 15, 18)

MYSTICAL DESIGNS AND PATTERNS OF MELANCHOLY

Anyone who approaches Browne using paradigms of the baroque style in prose will be disappointed, because, as C. A. Patrides has observed, "Browne's prose is not expansively Ciceronian nor laconically Senecan. It is both and neither."⁷ Browne's literary style, in conjunction with the subjects he explored, ranging "from the Mushrome to the Angels," reveals a great deal about the place of metaphor in what Debora Shuger has termed "sacred rhetoric" during the seventeenth century.⁸ His pious musings are a reflection of his ability to recognize and describe a single image, which then could stand for an entire metaphysical scheme. Browne focused on a particular image or metaphor and then described it from a variety of perspectives to illustrate some particular aspect of God's wisdom. He acknowledged that that wisdom went beyond the scope of human reason and vision; and yet he perceived in the gulf between them the possibility of creating a bridge to the divine. In the following passage, for example, Browne allows us a glimpse of the divine by calling into question the very means by which things are seen and, thus, known. (I cite this passage at length so that Browne's rhetorical movement and complicated argument can be followed in its original form, and also because, in this passage, he sums up many of the themes pertaining to the rhetorical and emblematic life of simulacra explored in Chapter 2, developed in Chapter 3, and concluded in Chapter 4.)

Nor are only dark and green colors, but shades and shadows contrived through the great Volume of nature, and trees ordained not only to protect and shadow others, but by their shades and shadowing parts, to preserve and cherish themselves. The whole radiation or branchings shadowing the stock and the root, the leaves, the branches and the fruit, too much exposed to the windes and scorching Sunne. . . . But Seeds themselves do lie in perpetual shades, either under leaf, or shut up in coverings; And such as lye barest, have their husks, skins, and pulps about them, wherein the nebbe and generative particle lyeth moist and secured from the injury of Ayre and Sunne. Darknesse and light hold interchangeable dominions, and alternately rule the seminal state of things. . . . Light that makes things seen, makes some things

invisible: were it not for darknesse and the shadow of the earth, the noblest part of the Creation had remained unseen, and the Stars in heaven as invisible as on the fourth day, when they were created above the Horizon, with the Sun, or there was not an eye to behold them. . . . Life it self is but the shadow of death, and souls departed but the shadows of the living: All things fall under this name. The Sunne it self is but the dark *simulachrum*, and light but the shadow of God. (*Garden* 4, pp. 217–18)

If the sun (the origin of light on earth) is a simulacrum, then the original is the unspeakably bright light of God's presence. Here Browne uses language in the same way a mystically oriented religious artist might use paint—to manipulate the available materials to produce an image of that which cannot otherwise be seen. His words evoke images which, through paradoxical twists, turn back on themselves and induce the reader to question his original view of the topic. The upshot of such an intellectual movement is that one finds his previously fixed base for evaluation shifting, even as he watches it being turned inside out before his eyes. The artistry involved in bringing this about also pushes to the limits the material effects of one's craft. It is akin to the experience of watching a magic trick; after our initial bewilderment, we question how the trick so easily got past our watchful eye and try to "figure it out." What we are left with, if not the solution itself, is a better understanding of the techniques involved in producing such an illusion. As we saw with the *trompe-l'oeil* cabinets and other visual tricks of the *vanitas* genre in Chapter 4, the techniques involved, as well as the symbolic meanings of the objects depicted, induce us to reflect on the limits of art—and thus on our own limitations as witnesses of this process.

In this sense Browne's use of the language of paradox accords with the endeavor of the visual allegorist, which is to call to mind an image that is virtually inexhaustible in its significations and which, as E. H. Gombrich has observed in another context, "shows us so much 'in a flash' that we return from its contemplation as from a dream we can no longer quite recount or explain."⁹ Also reminiscent of the moral emblemist's and self-conscious allegorist's aim, Browne seeks to engage the reader in the tension between clarity and obscurity—in the essentially aesthetic strife set up between the unconcealed and the concealed element of truth residing within the work of art—by confronting her with a familiar image that has been placed in an unfamiliar setting or context.¹⁰ He accomplishes his goal in the passage cited above by evoking the diametrically opposing images of "light" and "darkness," only to declare that the one collapses into the other. Even more paradoxically, drawing on Christian Neoplatonism, he intimates that the one actually *is* the other. Thus his emblematic conceit goes beyond the strict definition of the allegorical, insofar as, in the mid seventeenth century,

allegory was understood rhetorically to be a tropological inversion, which is to say an exchange of one thing for another.¹¹

In Browne's essay—and, indeed, in figurative writing more generally as an expression of the graphic unconscious—the images of things are rendered through the spatial arrangement of words.¹² Language facilitates the expression of ideas; and in Browne's case there is no picture, no visible "original" or model from which his metaphysical image can be drawn. In the passage above, Browne is not commenting merely on the properties of light, or even on the attributes of God, when he writes that "light [is] but the shadow of God." At a more profound level, he refers to familiar natural phenomena in hope of causing the reader to envision something beyond sensory experience. In addition to supplying the reader with a cleverly turned discursive image and verbal paradox, Browne provided a jolting, intellectual experience. He gave the reader a way to realize the mystical transference of language into an "unviewable" picture. Browne aimed to approximate that aspect of man which takes part in divine essence by means of what he called "certain characters." In so doing he provided a map of mortality of man by means of metaphor drawn from the twin components of our being: body and soul. This dual figuration of man (as body and soul) was used as metaphor in its own right, to discuss the components of visual conceits and mnemonic designs like emblems and *imprese*. For example, in Samuel Daniel's English version of Paolo Giovio's standard treatment of the propriety and composition of *imprese* (1585), the body and soul were said to correspond, respectively, to the image and word.¹³ (See Fig. P.R.2.) This commonplace understanding of the terms of the analogy was summarized by, among others, William Camden: "There is required in an Imprese (that wee may reduce them to few heades) a correspondencie of the picture, which is as the bodie, and the Motte, which as the soule giveth it life."¹⁴ Thus, typical of Browne's turning inside out the logic of emblematic commonplaces while stretching to its breaking point the Renaissance doctrine of signatures (based on the premise of the universal analogies and the inexhaustible correspondences between the microcosm and the macrocosm), he deployed an emblematic conceit in which "certain characters carry in them the motto of our souls."

[T]here is surely a Physiognomy, which those experienced and Master Mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a mercifull aspect, and will single out a face, wherein they spy the signatures and markes of mercy: for there are mystically in our faces certaine characters which carry in them the motto of our Soules, wherein he that cannot read A.B.C. may read our natures. . . . The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his workes, not graphicall or composed of Letters, but of their severall formes, constitutions, parts, and operations, which aptly joyned together make one word that doth expresse their natures. (*R.M.* 2.2, p. 72)

The extended conceit is more complicated than it may appear at first glance. It is an "emblematic conceit" in a double sense: It is a discursive simile drawing on a recognizable set of images, and, more literally, it likens man to a device (consisting of motto and *pittura*).¹⁵ Whereas the *impresa* declared a person's noble achievements or aspirations through the combined motto and picture, in Browne's version the person silently declares the word of his own soul. Implicit in such a comparison of the bipartite elements of man (body and soul) to those of the device (image and word) is the popular Neoplatonic assumption that the world is a hieroglyphical inscription of God.¹⁶ Unlike the Renaissance commentators on *imprese* who based their notions of the legibility of the world on that of the device (like Tesauro, who likened the material world to a divine poem composed of decipherable conceits),¹⁷ Browne used the legibility of the device as a way of demonstrating something about the nature of man. His conceit presumes that the motto, composed of "certain characters," provides a way to read the picture (the soul). According to the conceit, however, our face is like the banner on which our soul's motto is inscribed. The characters in one's face constitute the text in question. The motto (*inscriptio*) which provides a way to read the picture also supplies the key for interpreting the complete device. To summarize, then, Browne's emblematic conceit: the motto, made up of mystically inscribed characters, corresponds to the body of the man who is being read, and the "invisible" picture corresponds to his soul. It is not a picture of the soul of man but, according to the terms used to interpret a device, the picture *is* the soul. The body, or motto, therefore is the only visible part of this *impresa*, because the soul is beyond the range of mortal vision. By what means then can such a picture be sketched or depicted? This question succinctly expresses the underlying concern of Browne's literary endeavors, and here he used the metaphor of the *impresa* to reveal something about the paradoxical nature of the tension between the soul and its physical encasing. A more precise understanding of what is revealed will become clearer as we continue our inquiry into Browne's anamnestic (and, as we shall see, hieroglyphic) prose style. To help us along our way, let us consider a "naked emblem," as it was termed (one not "quickened"—or animated—by an accompanying picture) by Francis Quarles, England's most celebrated Protestant emblemist.

Drawing on the commonplace that a picture was but a "shadow" or simulacrum of an original object, Quarles set up the metaphor of man's dual condition in terms of a picture. We do well to bear in mind several things before turning to the poem. First, within a decade of the publication of his poem "On God's Image" (1632), Quarles would attempt to revive a pictorial element in what had already become a potentially inhospitable literary culture.¹⁸ Second, irrespective of religious orientation, the average English

subject would have been well acquainted with the trope (and to some extent believed in the truth of it) that man was created in God's image.¹⁹ Also, it was a commonplace among Christian intellectuals that man was a translation of God's thought into substance—a process paralleled in the formulation and expression of a thought-image or conceit.²⁰ Unlike a device or emblem, however, man is self-conscious and therefore can be aware that he is both an "image of God" and the proprietor of this image. Such a concept is difficult to represent pictorially without resorting to crude anthropomorphism. Francis Quarles was among the poets who tried to find words adequately and ingeniously to represent this involved image.

It was a *dainty piece!* In every part,
 Drawn to the life, and full of curious Art:
 It was like thee as a *shadow* could
 Be like a *substance*; There was none but would
 Have known thee by't: There needed then no name,
 No golden *Characters*, that might proclame
 Whose *Picture* 'twas: the Art was so divine
 That very Beasts did reverence, as thine:
 But now, alas, 'tis blurr'd: the best that we
 Or they can judge, is this, 'twas made for thee:
 Alas, 'tis faded, soyl'd with hourelly dust,
 Sullyed, and shadow'd with the smoak of *Lust*;
 So swarthy as if that glorious face of thine
 Were tawnd underneath the *torrid Line*:
 How is thy *Picture* altered! How ill us'd
 By our neglects! how slubbard! how abus'd!
 Her Cedar *Frame's* disjoynted, warp'd and broke;
 Her curious *Tablet's* tainted with the smoke:²¹

The main conceit most obviously concerns the Christian tenet that man was made in God's image. And yet Quarles builds on it in order to reveal an even greater mystery: the Incarnation, the translation of the spirit into flesh. And he does so by shifting from his imagery of mortal artifice and shadows and sooty smoke to that of conservation of the work of art, a return to the original form that precedes the shadow, and a general cleaning and restoration.

There is a great *Apelles* that can lim
 With thy own *Pencill*, we have sought to *Him*:
 His skilfull hand will wash off all the soyle,
 And clense thy *Picture* with his sacred Oyle:
 Hee'l mak't more faire than 'twas; at least, the same;
 Hee'l mend the *Tablet*, and renew the *Frame*:

Till then; be pleas'd to let thy Picture be
 Acknowleg'd *thine*: 'Twas made for none but *thee*.

The correspondences between Apelles and Christ are easy to follow in Quarles's poem, aptly titled "On God's Image." The painter's cleansing oil is Christ's blood; the tablet refers to the human mind, and the frame is the body supporting the "picture." The picture (man) made in the image of God was, of course, made by God. And this "picture" is the subject as well as the principal image of this conceit of the human condition. The figurative description of "man" (as a "dainty piece" of "Art," hourly becoming soiled but capable of being restored) is itself subject to the very process of translation the poem describes. This is the case, however, only insofar as the narrative of the poem may be seen to mirror the cyclic incarnation of God as man (the translation of the spirit into flesh), who is later transfigured from flesh to spirit and, eventually, reunited with the Word.²² But it remains still for us to see how Quarles's emblematic conceit does indeed mirror the miraculous translation of the "Word."

For Quarles, as for Browne, visible objects were used to call to mind the invisible and thereby to evoke the spiritual. Quarles's metaphysical theme concerns God's charity toward man despite man's unworthiness. It is designed to make men "see" that their original beauty can no longer be seen. Appropriately, this conceit involves a reference to the greatest painter of the ancient world—whose work (and, no doubt, this contributes to his status as paragon) has not been seen for centuries.²³ Unlike the first Apelles who represented things in nature so as to create the illusion of their presence, the new Apelles takes things in nature and makes them resemble what they once were. And, even more accurately, because his medium is the human form, this "great Apelles" who "can lim" with God's own tool is able to translate man, the soiled image of God, into an even more beautiful image than when he was first created. The threshold to the moment of miraculous translation—the translation of the body into the disembodied and liberated soul—is death.

Browne delighted in teasing out the intricate logical tangles of his somewhat more complicated version of the metaphor of man being a tablet or text. Like Quarles, Browne took as his point of departure the commonplace that man partakes of two realms, the corporal and the spiritual. However, unlike Quarles, he reasoned initially that, instead of being in and of both, man occupied a unique place in between the world of the flesh and that of the spirit.

we are onely that amphibious piece betweene a corporall and spirituall
 essence, that middle frame that linkes those two together, and makes good

the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extreames, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures . . . but to call our selves a Microcosme, or little world, I thought it onely a pleasant trope of Rhetorick, till my nearer judgement and second thoughts told me there was a reall truth therein. (R.M. 1.34, p. 44)

After exploring the possibilities and exercising his reason, Browne found a real truth in "a pleasant trope of Rhetorick." His reflection on how he came to this knowledge is indicative of his attitude toward metaphors in general. Browne was willing to seek out and recover the truths concealed within rhetorical tropes. Instead of seeing rhetorical devices as so many trappings and ornaments that cloaked or concealed truths, he conceived this aspect of language in the same way he conceived the human condition: as metaphorically and really consisting of two worlds, the visible and invisible. But isn't this an impossible situation, one that can be sustained only by unwavering faith or else through concerted intellectual effort and sophistry? A passage from *Religio Medici* on the body and spirit can help us respond to this rhetorical question, and begin to see how and to what end Browne opened up a space for truth, to let it shine forth as if from out of a clearing, by virtue of his application of ready-made conventions of expression.

Following his statement that "[t]he whole Creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man," Browne addresses two paradoxes fundamental to Christianity which, as we have seen, he mentioned in *Religio Medici* 1.9: God's incarnation (the translation of the Word into flesh) and resurrection (the transfiguration of the corporeal). He augments the divinely mysterious character of these paradoxes by reaching a rather unconventional conclusion, although he uses all of the proper, conventional images.

Now for these wals of flesh, wherein the soule doth seeme to be immured before the Resurrection, it is nothing but an elementall composition, and a fabricke that must fall to ashes; *All flesh is grasse*, is not onely metaphorically, but literally true, for all those creatures we behold, are but the hearbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in our selves. Nay further, we are what we all abhorre, *Antropophagi* and Cannibals, devourers not onely of men, but of our selves; and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth; for all this masse of flesh which wee behold, came in at our mouths: this frame we look upon, hath beene upon our trenchers; In briefe, we have devoured our selves. (R.M. 1.37, pp. 47–48)²⁴

What begins as an expression of the mystical is transformed, by a logical paradox, into a literal rendering of the biblical pronouncement, "All flesh is grass" (Isa. 40:6). Browne's double claim that the paradox expressed by this sentence is both metaphorically and literally true is itself doubled in his

more literal, and grotesquely playful, claim that his assertion is true both allegorically and naturally. We must not be so dazzled by this clever contortion of conventional logic that we lose sight of Browne's ultimate aim in this passage, which is to recognize and to some extent represent the principle of design that animates our very formulation of the idea of the truth of human "Being."²⁵ Because I am using the term "Being" here in a special sense, and because much of my analysis of Browne leading up to this point is indebted to the structures of thought set out by Martin Heidegger, I would take a moment to reflect on my theoretical approach to Browne's appropriation and transformation of mnemonic emblems in the service of his expression of the truth of Being as being at once an existential and an ideational construct. Despite their different aims and historical moments, more than a slight similarity exists between Browne's rhetorical and conceptual play in his description of how man exists in the world, as a kind of reflection on (and of) our "Being-there," and Heidegger's treatment of *Dasein*, which takes into account the language used "to bring to presence" the concepts implied or signified. The description of the problem of representing man's presence in the world as treated in *Religio Medici* (1.34) can serve as a gloss on, and can be glossed by, Heidegger's more analytic expression of the same:

Dasein never "finds itself" except as a thrown Fact. In the *state-of-mind in which it finds itself*, *Dasein* is assailed by itself as the entity which it still is and already was—that is to say, which it constantly *is* as having been. The primary existential meaning of facticity lies in the character of "having been."²⁶

The twin theme of the projection and reconstruction of the idea of the end of our life as the passage from one state to another—as we just saw flesh from grass, spirit from flesh—reappears throughout Browne's writings and reinforces his contention that, somehow, the literal is sublated into (and by means of) the metaphorical, where the metaphorical is Browne's shorthand for the concept of an authentic and yet still mystically driven reality of the human condition. Or, in Heidegger's terms, such a mode of Being-in-the-world is understood as (and lived in terms of) a being-toward-death. For example, in the section following his exposition regarding "the first day of our Jubilee is death," Browne observes:

NOW besides this literall and positive kinde of death, there are others whereof Divines make mention, and those I thinke, not meerly Metaphoricall, as Mortification, dying unto sine and the world; therefore, I say, every man hath a double Horoscope, one of his humanity, his birth; another of his Christianity, his baptism. . . . In these mortall acceptions, the way to be immortall is to die daily; nor can I thinke I have the true Theory of death, when I contemplate a skull, or behold a Skeleton with those vulgar imagina-

tions it casts upon us; I have therefore enlarged that common *Memento mori*, into a more Christian memorandum, *Memento quatuor novissima*, those foure inevitable points of us all, Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell. (R.M. 1.45, p. 55)

For the moment let us take Browne at his word, that contemplating a skull is not sufficient in itself but that we must enlarge that common *memento mori*. This theme exactly, no less than the method of emblematic augmentation in the service of allowing his theme to give up its literal and metaphorical realities, reappears and is magnified in *Hydriotaphia; or, Urne Buriall* and *The Garden of Cyrus* (1658), two essays meant to be read together.²⁷ Like the image of man as being composed of body and soul, they are two elements seen with respect to a grander, more encompassing design. As part of Browne's grander design, the five-part essays *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*, which complement and supplement one another, are to be scanned as one might view an intricately wrought diptych where each panel, filled with a coherent iconographic program made up of discernible images and suggestive mottoes, folds over the other to produce a more complex and integrated meaning.²⁸ (Cf. in particular Figs. 4.38 and 4.39.) Like van der Weyden's work of art Browne's essays involve more than one vanishing point, and so it is not an easy task to locate a unitary point of reference from which one can regard the whole at once. Moreover, at the center of the whole, the viewer sees a gap; he sees the empty space, which like *caesura* at once joins and keeps separate the two parts of a carefully arranged syntax of images, and which constitutes an expansion of a traditional *memento mori* emblem. With this in mind, let us look closer at the epistemological implication of Browne's literary diptych, *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*, which can be seen as well as an exemplary expression of the coincidence of melancholy designs and mnemonic emblems in baroque aesthetics.²⁹

URN BURIAL AND GARDEN OF CYRUS READ AS A MEMENTO MORI DIPTYCH

Browne's original readers viewed his apparently digressive treatment of urns and gardens as companion works.³⁰ In the preface to *Garden*, the work's overall structure is figured as replicating the Christian paradox of death and the decay that promotes life.

That we conjoyn these parts of different Subjects, or that this should succeed the other; Your judgement will admit without impute of incongruity; Since the delightfull World comes after death, and Paradise succeeds the Grave. Since the verdant state of things is the Symbole of the Resurrection, and to

flourish in the state of Glory, we must first be sown in corruption. Beside the ancient practise of Noble Persons, to conclude in Garden-Graves, and Urnes themselves of old, to be wrapt up in flowers and garlands. (*Garden*, pp. 176–77)

As this passage indicates, *The Garden of Cyrus* (whose main themes are regeneration and the prospect of ongoing life after death) follows both logically and mystically from *Urn Burial* (whose themes are transience and examples of vain mortal efforts to overcome oblivion).³¹ In addition to the obvious thematic overlapping, or doubling, of the two main images (gardens becoming graveyards and burial urns covered with flowers), there is another instance of double movement informing this passage, which involves simultaneously looking back to an original context while moving forward. It calls upon all three kinds of memory previously discussed: monitory, retroactive, and projective. In the passage above, Browne draws upon a sententia, pointing back to the Bible and also presaging the expository method of his idiosyncratic discourse.

But there is more here than immediately meets the eye, as will be revealed by a close reading of the source-verse from which Browne extracted the sententia “we must first be sown in corruption” (1 Cor. 15:42). I quote it at length because, as will become evident, it furnished Browne with the main theme of, the principal set of images for, and the aesthetic principle of design underlying and animating *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*.

But some man will say, How are the dead rayzed up? and with what body doe they come? Thou foole, that which thou sowest, is not quickened except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare graine, it may chance of wheate, or of some other graine. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his owne body. . . . There are also celestially bodies, and bodies terrestrially: But the glorie of the celestially is one, and the glorie of the terrestrially is another. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. . . . It is sown a naturall body, it is raised a spirituall bodie. There is a naturall bodie, and there is a spirituall bodie. And so it is written: The first man Adam was made a living soule, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spirituall: but that which is naturall, and afterward that which is spirituall. The first man is of the earth, earthy: The second man is the Lord from heaven. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthly, wee shall also beare the image of the heavenly.³²

Browne follows the pattern set out here to the letter, and thereby he preserved the allegorical and mystical senses of the original. The first of his es-

says, *Urn Burial*, addresses the terrestrial world, the "earthly." It takes as its point of departure the natural order of life and death, and the dissolution and perishing of the body, which has "borne the image of the earthly." It recounts the pathetic efforts of men, tenants of corruptible bodies, to overcome oblivion by their own means. As an essay on the "naturall bodie," it precedes one addressing the "spirituall bodie" and supernatural regeneration.

Just as with the two aspects of man depicted in a *portrait macabre* (see, for example, Figs. 4.32 and 4.33), the antithetical images of the two essays come into view at a glance when we consider them side by side. *Urn Burial*, inspired by recently discovered artifacts in Norfolk, addresses the momentary and the local. Its concerns are the temporal, the mutable, the pathetic, and the nameless.

There is no antidote against the *Opium* of time, which temporarily considereth all things; Our Fathers finde their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our Survivors. Grave-stones tell truth scarce fourty years: Generations passe while some trees stand, and old Families last not three Oaks. To be read by bare Inscriptions . . . to hope for Eternity by Aenigmaticall Epithetes, or first letters of our names, to be studied by Antiquaries, who we were, and have new Names given us like many Mummies, are cold consolations unto the Students of perpetuity, even by everlasting Languages. (*Urn Burial* 5, pp. 166-67)

In contrast to *Urn Burial* bound up in temporality, *The Garden of Cyrus* addresses timelessness. Browne grounds his essay on the design of the quincunx (:·:) prevalent, he says, in both art and nature. This five-part essay addresses the universal, the immutable, and the everlasting. The two essays, as two aspects of a larger body, imitate the narrative movement described in Corinthians to the effect that "There is a naturall bodie, and there is a spirituall bodie. . . . The first man Adam was made a living soule . . . and afterward that which is spirituall." The first essay builds on images of the tomb; the latter, on the seed-state of things, nurtured in the womb of time.

If one were to characterize *Urn Burial* by a color, it would be dark brown or black; its humor would be melancholy; its condition, dryness; and its earthly correspondence, stony soil. The color of *The Garden* is green; its quickening humor is phlegm; its condition, moist; and its earthly correspondence, lush fields. The examples of death, decay, and burial methods cited in *Urn Burial* give it a decidedly funereal tone. The many and varied examples convey a sense of enclosure, and its themes reiterate the inevitability of man's being reduced to ashes, his most rudimentary and elemental form.

But their insatisfaction herein begat that remarkable invention in the Funerall Pyres of some Princes, by incombustible sheets made with a texture of *Asbestos*, incremable flax, or Salamanders wool, which preserve their bones and ashes incommixed.

How the bulk of a man should sink into so few pounds of bones and ashes, may seem strange unto any who considers not its constitution, and how slender a masse will remain upon an open and urging fire of the carnall composition. Even bones themselves reduced into ashes, so abate a notable proportion. (*Urn Burial* 3, p. 153)

Browne is concerned most with considering the constitution of the “bulk of a man,” and he expresses this by remarking on reducing the body to its most rudimentary components. The certain knowledge of this leads us to devise symbols that both reflect and are motivated by our will to endure and also to construct memorials that will announce in their own way our former presence in the world. But, as Browne indicates, the only lasting memorials set up in the world are those left by the hand and stylus of God. Thus he takes this mystic writing system as a model for expressing his own design, and, to this end, he invented and disposed within his text fundamental monitory units of discourse—or *mnemenes*, as discussed in Chapter 3—which are most noticeable as “naked emblems” and are recognized in the forms of *exempla* and *sententiae*.³³ The image and place, each in its own right, are signs; and each *mnememe* brings into relation signs that function as discursive prompts or mnemonic cues.³⁴ It also bears reiterating that these signs reflect and call forth a special kind of knowledge associated with a highly developed sense of visualization typical of artificial memory schemes.³⁵

But before examining some of these *mnemenes* (in the form of cryptic ideograms) and the melancholy designs they embody and convey, let us consider the larger mnemonic edifice into which they are placed. Let me emphasize, however, that I am not simply referring metaphorically to Browne's text as an edifice; his composition, in form and function, is a kind of transtemporal and intertextual Memory Palace. To understand the extent to which this is the case, and the end to which Browne carried out such a design, let us consider some of the main points of opposition and contrast between the two essays. For whereas *Urn Burial* emphasizes enclosure and compactness, *The Garden* emphasizes disclosure and exfoliation. To use the terms of the baroque style of prose popularized by Morris Croll, the former favors the curt, epigrammatic style and the latter the copious, burgeoning style. In contrast to the melancholy themes of *Urn Burial*, *The Garden* discusses efflorescence. Its exuberant prose declares, and is itself a token of, the endless proliferation of life—and of the production of meaning. The subjects discussed in *Garden of Cyrus* are variations on the theme that every

seed has its own body, and it reiterates the transformation of things from crude pubescence into perfected form.

A large field is yet left unto sharper discerners to enlarge upon this order, to search out the *quaternio's* and figured draughts of this nature, and moderating the study of names, and meet nomenclature of plants, to erect generalities, disclose unobserved properties, not only in the vegetable shop, but the whole volume of nature; affording delightful Truths, confirmable by sense and ocular Observation, which seems to me the surest path, to trace the Labyrinth of Truth. (*Garden* 5, pp. 225–26)

Put simply, *Urn Burial* addresses death and decay; its counterpart, *The Garden*, rebirth and everlasting life. Like a *memento mori* emblem it urges the viewer to remember his or her mortality and then to act accordingly; *Urn Burial* invites us to consider our natural body, and *The Garden* our spiritual body. (The same holds for the two back panels of van der Weyden's Braque Triptych [Figs. 4.38 and 4.39] and also for the open book at the bottom of "The Map of Mortalitie" [Fig. 1.17].) Images of the frailty and corruptibility of man abound in *Urn Burial*, just as *The Garden* is strewn with images of redemption and themes of continuity. But the comparison of these essays to a diptych or to a *memento mori* emblem goes beyond being merely a convenient metaphor for speaking about the design in Browne's prose; it has validity in a literal sense as well and, following Browne's lead, it must be enlarged to encompass the four last things—and beyond.

Browne constructed his essays on death and resurrection, on the two bodies of man. When seen in this way, as a coherent unit, they can be likened to a lyrically filmed "long shot" in a short film of a skull, blown violently across a sparsely flowering field, turning every which way as it rolls and skips, so that we can see it from many angles, and yet no secrets are given up; we learn nothing more about the object of our scrutiny than that it can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. But what about that which is hidden from view, the seeds that lie in the earth and the bone chips that fertilize the soil? Is the lesson from this parable the same as that expressed through the emblem bearing a motto "*Spes altera vitae*" (Fig. P.R.2)? Yes, and more; because it concerns our learning to recognize and locate the unseen elements, and how to go about piecing them together with what can be seen. Thus, in *Urn Burial*, Browne writes of roadside markers in the ancient world as "Memorials of themselves, and *memento's* of mortality unto the living passengers." The landscape is turned by man into a text of "the sensible Rhetorick of the dead" (*Urn Burial* 3, p. 155). He also speaks of certain plants used in pagan funeral ceremonies as "silent expressions of their surviving hopes: Wherein Christians which deck their Coffins with Bays

have found a more elegant Embleme" (*Urn Burial* 4, p. 159). The reason he gives for the greater elegance of that "natural" emblem of resurrection may be taken as a sign of Browne's concern with matching the manner to the sentiment expressed. Furthermore, the entire essay moves from example to example of the efforts throughout history, and in the present, to devise, design, construct, and leave behind material memorials intended as durable simulacra of one's former presence—and Browne repeatedly points out the absurdity and inevitable failure of such commemorative gestures in the light of Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. With this gloss in mind, we can continue reading the passage, and see in it Browne's practice of enlarging his *memento mori*:

For that tree seeming dead, will restore it self from the root, and its dry and exuccous leaves resume their verdure again; which if we mistake not, we have also observed in furze. Whether the planting of yewe in Churchyards, hold not its originall from ancient Funerall rites, or as an Embleme of Resurrection from its perpetual verdure, may also admit conjecture. (*Urn Burial* 4, p. 159)

Just as the Romans' roadside markers are mementos of themselves and reminders of the inevitability of death rather than of the nameless individuals to whom the monuments were erected, every man can see in himself his own *memento mori*. "Since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying *memento's*, and time that grows old itself, bids us hope for no long duration: Diuturnity is the dream and folly of expectation" (*Urn Burial* 4, p. 168).

In sleep, we resemble ourselves in death, and if we could watch ourselves when we sleep we would perceive an image of ourselves in death—though one prior to the putrefaction and dissolution of our bodies. So too we cannot actually see ourselves in death but can imagine our decay and putrescence through emblems and other such moral mirrors (for example, Figs. 2.2 and 2.5). Such an image of man in death precedes the image of oneself after resurrection. The image of man-in-death therefore implies, on the one hand, decay and corruptibility and, on the other, rebirth and incorruptibility. This double image of death corresponds to the double design of *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*.³⁶ And so, rather than characterize the dominant trait of Browne's literary and mystical design as a tension between two opposing forces or elements, let us consider Browne's essays as embodying and illustrating the essential strife in which the two raise each other into the self-assertion of their natures. In the ensuing interplay, each thus carries the other beyond itself.³⁷

The visual allegorist, like the essayist, evoked this melancholy image of death to make the reader recognize that aspect of himself which is always

most intimate to him but which remains just beyond his grasp or view. Therefore we must acknowledge that already (and always) we resemble the thing we most abhor (ourselves in death) and carry the seed of our death within our own bodies (for the characteristic existential feature of our life is our being-toward-death). This is not only metaphorically but literally true. And yet the double truth espoused here applies to men, according to Browne, only up to the time when we are translated from the flesh into spirit.

I beleeeve . . . that the soules of men . . . subsist beyond the body, and outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle; that the soules of the faithfull, as they leave earth, take possession of Heaven: that those apparitions, and ghosts of departed persons, are not the wandering soules of men, but the unquiet walkes of Devils. (*R.M.* 1.37, p. 48)

To return to *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*, we can remark now more conclusively that they are intimately related in theme and form, and each serves to raise the other into the self-assertion of their own true natures. In the striving, in that interplay, each carries the other beyond itself, but their reflective design runs deeper and wider still. For example, Browne's rhetoric of doubling permeates all levels of his essays, from the external structure (each has five chapters)³⁸ to its textual fabric (the pattern of doubled descriptions and also the doubling of languages in many of his doublets).³⁹ These two essays were intended to mirror one another in conspicuous ways, perhaps to establish a pattern of doubling and reflexivity that would encourage readers to detect other, even more subtle connections.

As both a number and a figure, "five" is important to Browne's project, both because of its mystical implications catalogued in *The Garden of Cyrus* and also because it provides an artificial bridge between the disparate phenomena discussed in the two essays. Such artifice was highly esteemed by Browne, who argued triumphantly that everything in the world was artificial (and artful) because, after all, "nature is the Art of God" (*R.M.* 1.16, p. 26). But this bridge—in the form and figure of expressions of fiveness—was itself transformed into Browne's principal vehicle for conveying meanings from one essay to the other. Thus fiveness became his extraordinary and charmed metaphor. Just as man's body was designed by God to allow him to move for a time in this world until translated into the next, Browne's design allows key words to convey one sense in the first essay and then to take on a richer allegorical significance when used in the succeeding one. In the movement of meanings from one essay to the other through versions of the word and the concept "five," which is carried out in such a way as to exemplify the very theme it would convey, the reader can glimpse some-

thing of truth's double nature.⁴⁰ We must think of the word "five" as both a quantity and a figure (whether signified by the word "quincuncial" or the sign :: and whether "five" or "V"). Further, Browne is using it at times in a particular and at times in a general sense—and at times as both at once. Browne used it to denote a fixed quantity, and he also used it to convey both literal and metaphorical messages. Let us begin reconstructing the emblematic and anamnestic assumptions of this aspect of Browne's method of composition by considering the feature common to both essays, which the reader encounters, as it were, before beginning to read: the frontispiece.

Each frontispiece is prefaced by what could pass for an emblem, consisting of a picture and motto, that sets up the essay's main concerns (Figs. 5.1 and 5.2). The text of each essay, in effect, is the extended commentary on those emblems. Thus the essays can be seen as an exercise in invention, where interpretation is understood as the copious amplification of a topic associated with the commonplace image and accompanying sententia.⁴¹ But, of course, it is much more than this. It is comparable to a convex mirror (or a reflective fisheye lens) which, in a small area, brings into view a wide range of images that otherwise could not be seen at once. In this sense they are like components in an elaborate memory system, designed to trigger a succession of visual and verbal commonplaces.⁴² These two emblems function in more ways than simply as visual prefaces to their respective five-part essays; as already indicated, they are involved in a dialogue with one another—at the level of their respective mnememes and each in its own right. As we turn now to look more closely at their complex relationship, let us recall the importance of the number 5 in mnemonic constructions during the early modern period—a commonplace that Browne seems to have been keenly interested in spinning out toward oblivion.⁴³

The mottoes to these emblems both contain the term "five." The reader is thus encouraged to focus on the word and note its role first in one setting and then in the other. The citation making up the "soul" of this emblem, whose "body" is an image of four burial urns, reads: "En sum quod digitis Quinque Levatur onus Propert" ("a small burden that can be lifted with the five fingers of one hand").⁴⁴ The caption to the diagram of *The Garden of Cyrus* is "Quid Quincunce speciosius, qui, in quam cunq[ue] partem spectaueris, rectus est: Quintilian: / /" and may be translated "What is more beautiful than the quincunx which, in whatsoever part it is viewed, is straight?"⁴⁵ This motto, addressing the comeliness and harmonious design of the lozenge shape, encapsulates the main theme of the essay and offers the key for unlocking the secret of its peculiar anamnestic style of composition.⁴⁶ This sententia also establishes a link with the previous essay by the repetition of "quin-" which when "que" is added signifies "five." The particular meaning "five" makes the "quin-" of "quinque" a bridge between the two essays.

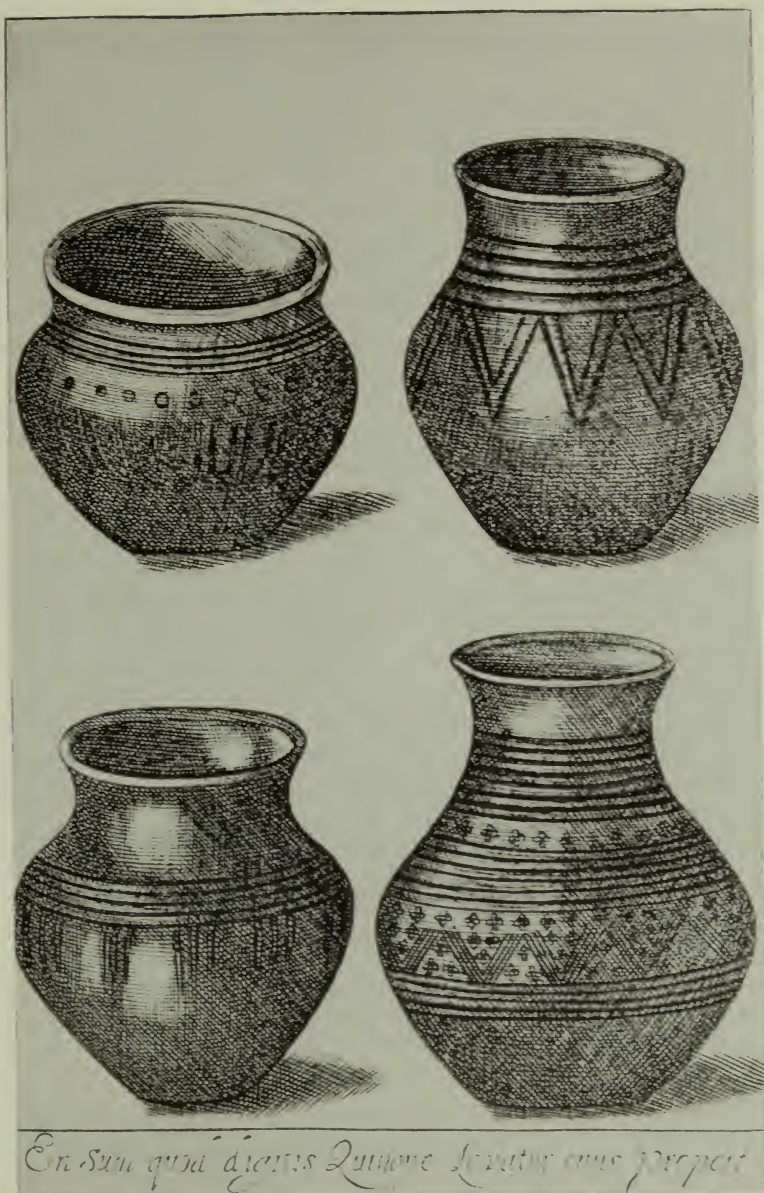
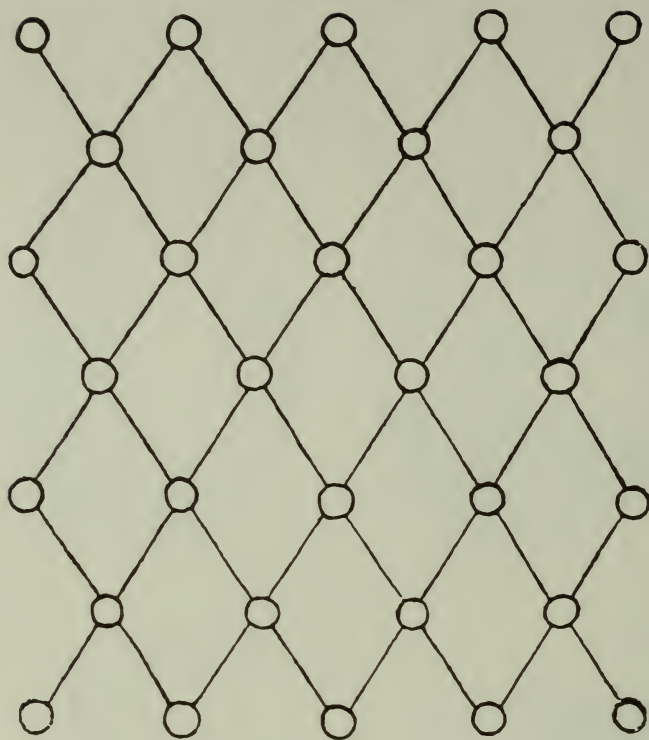


FIG. 5.1. Burial urns. Thomas Browne, *Hydriotaphia* (London, 1658).



*Quid Quincunce speciosius, qui, in
quam cunq[ue] partem spectaueris,
rectus est: Quintilian://*

FIG. 5.2. Quincunx. Thomas Browne, *The Garden of Cyrus* (London, 1658).

Furthermore, the alliterative construction of this quotation, through the sonorous repetition of the inaugural and medial sounds of both “quinque” and “quincunce,” calls attention to the combinatory aspects of “quin,” suggesting on the one hand “five”; and further, it is possible (owing to the prefixing of “quin” to key words in both of the mottoes) that there is a silent pun on the interrogative “why not?” or the corroborative “as a matter of fact”—or perhaps both. Further, it calls attention to the broader theme of the repetition signifying difference and not redundancy, so integral to Browne’s project: “*Quid Quincunce speciosius, qui, in quam cunq[ue] spec-*

taueris, rectus est: *Quintilian*." The author's name is itself a parting echo of the Latin term signifying the fifth place.

The discursive prefatory material contains further evidence of this kind of literal, phonemic, mnemonic, and typographical play as well. For example, V, as the symbol for five, is used to evoke a secondary and also double meaning in a crucial sentence of the dedicatory letter to Nicholas Bacon. (V stands for the letter U—even though the printer might just as easily have used a *u* font, because they appear throughout the text.) Browne reminds the reader "*how few generalities and V finita's there are in nature*." He glosses this idiom in a margin note: "Rules without exceptions." He alludes to the memorized rule in Latin grammar that all final *u*'s are long. It may be as well a macabre pun based on the phonic and literal rendering: "final you." With *Urn Burial* addressing man's ultimate and unalterable end, as well as the long sleep prior to resurrection, the pun on finita, as a "rule without exception," is evident. But there is an added irony, because Browne's exposition of the quincunx in *The Garden* argues that nature is far more regular than one might expect, and he offers as proof the lozenge's recurrent design.

Browne's self-conscious manipulation of language intimates what he would disclose about life in general, that things may be literally and metaphorically true and that everything—whether natural, such as a seed, or artificial, such as a hieroglyph—contains a microcosmic expression of its true nature. This aspect of Browne's artistry is most easily detected by looking closely at the two crucial words assigned to the essays. Before scrutinizing them, however, we must bear in mind that each word collapses into a cipher and, like the essays themselves, unite to produce a meaning that neither could convey alone. This practice recalls the structural principles associated with Browne's use of mnememes.

In *Urn Burial*, for example, the often repeated "diuturnity" (which means "long duration") expresses the essay's principal theme in a word. I use this last phrase both literally and figuratively because the word "urn," like an urn buried in the earth, is embedded in the verbal structure of the word "diuturnity." Similarly, "Quincunx," referring to the lozenge pattern like the five on a die, dominates *The Garden* in both word and idea. Its importance is highlighted by the fact that its symbol (:·:) forms the terminal letter of the English word (quincunx). This accident of language may well have enabled Browne to make it stand both for the end of the word and for the end of man. He uses this letter, as an idiosyncratic hieroglyph, to initiate a seemingly endless chain of associations. The ensuing meanings paradoxically come out of and yet encompass the symbol of the quincunx. The letter X takes on further meanings when considered as a number. The roman numeral X stands for five doubled, and its shape, resembling the intersecting of two "V"s (the roman numeral designating "five"), reinforces this

meaning. Browne leaves it to the reader to judge what might be signified by this coincidence of form and meaning. This same coincidence marks the structure of *Urn* and *Garden* on a larger scale, inasmuch as the earthly focus of the first essay points downward (V), and the spiritual focus of the second upward (^). Thus, when brought together, each points toward the other (X) and ultimately acquires its full meaning only in conjunction with and respect to the other.

Already rich with associations for Christian readers, X, as both a letter and a symbol, is superimposed upon the tomb imagery of the first essay to complete Browne's enlarged literary emblem of *memento mori*. This aspect of the letter X recurs in *The Garden* through the repetition of the word "decussate," the intersection of two lines.⁴⁷ The word "cross" appears at least ten times, and some form of its uncommon latinate form "decussate" appears nine times—significantly more often than other nonauxiliary terms. This web of key words anticipates the main theme of the essay (decussation) and thus establishes its shorthand symbol (X), which will eventually converge with and thus transfigure the hieroglyphical character associated with *Urn Burial*, Θ, signifying death, a cipher derived from the beginning of the Greek word for death (*thanatos*).

Let us look closer at this complicated play of the literal and figurative implications of a sign that becomes a symbol, and hence a mnememe, in the twofold design of *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*. The principal theme of *Urn Burial* is the death and decay of the body; and Browne used and transformed the cipher of death (Θ) in an involved emblematic conceit. "Circles and right lines limit and close all bodies, and the mortall right-lined circle, must conlude and shut up all" (*Urn Burial* 5, p. 166).⁴⁸ The dominant symbol of *The Garden* is, as we have seen, the quincunx (: · :). This design, detectable in many aspects of nature, represents initially the network of a well-arranged garden and also signifies the neb, or the seed stage of life. Thus it lent itself conveniently as an emblem of transformation. More particularly, it stands for regeneration, and, as was generally accepted in the seventeenth century, it connotes the mystical translation of flesh into spirit. Browne transformed it further still, into the letter x which, "being doubled at the angle," is the "Emphaticall decussation, or fundamental figure" (*Garden* 1, p. 181).

The letter x, seen as a mnememe, is as fertile as any commonplace heading of topical invention, and it is fundamental to his metaphysics, which he unfolds in *The Garden* by citing its numerous artificial, natural, and mystical implications. The Greek letter *chi* (χ), turned on its side, graphically represents both the instrument of God-the-Son's death and also the conventional symbol for Christianity (+). As we have observed previously,⁴⁹ the sign of the cross evokes the Age of the Second Adam and thus

the intervention of God in human history to counteract mortality with the promise of eternal life. This letter is also the first in the Greek rendering of "Christ" (*xpistos*) and, when combined with the second letter, was recognized by primitive Christians as a sign of unity and belief (the so-called chi-rho [R]).

Browne's reference to such ciphers, and his use of other symbols like them, recalls the coded way of writing practiced by the early Christians, which Neoplatonists regarded as an apt imitation of God's hieroglyphical inscriptions onto the "great volume of Nature." It finds its most complex literary expression in the closing section of chapter 4 of *The Garden*, which enables us to summarize both Browne's method and his aim.⁵⁰

And if Aegyptian Philosophy may obtain, the scale of influences was thus disposed, and the geniall spirits of both worlds, do trace their way in ascending and descending Pyramids, mystically apprehended in the Letter X, and the open Bill and stradling Legges of a Stork, which was imitated by that Character.

Of this figure *Plato* made choice to illustrate the motion of the soul, both of the world and man; while he delivereth that God divided the whole conjunction length-wise, according to the figure of the Greek X, and then turning it about reflected it into a circle; By the circle implying the uniform motion of the first Orb, and by the right lines, the planetical and various motions within it. And this also unto the application of the soul of man, which hath a double aspect, one right, whereby it beholdeth the body, and objects without; another circular and reciprocal, whereby it beholdeth it self. The circle declaring the motion of the indivisible soul, simple, according to the divinity of its nature, and returning into it self; the right lines respecting the motion pertaining unto sense, and vegetation, and the central decussation, the wondrous connexion of the severall faculties conjointly in one substance. And so conjoynd the unity and duality of the soul, and made out the three substances so much considered by him; That is, the indivisible or divine, the divisible or corporeal, and that third, which was the *Systasis*, or harmony of those two, in the mystical decussation.

And if that were clearly made out which *Justin Martyr* took for granted, this figure hath had the honour to characterize and notifie our blessed Savior, as he delivereth in that borrowed expression from *Plato*; *Decussavit eum in universo* [He placed him crosswise in the universe]. (*Garden* 4, p. 220)

As C. A. Patrides has observed, this complicated argument must be visualized, "for it involves not only Christ's initial in Greek (X) and the Cross (+ or T) but patterns which, made by the intersecting circles if rotated on a vertical axis, pass through the Greek letter *theta* [Θ] representing *thanatos* or death."⁵¹

This complex emblematic conceit illustrates the principle of composi-

tion that animates the overarching design of *Urn Burial* and *The Garden*. The harmony of the two is made visible through the conjoining of those symbols standing for each essay's main theme; the full meaning comes into sight only when the emblems of each [O and X] are brought within a single circle.⁵² Browne, like others of his day, recognized the myriad possibilities of the circle—especially as an emblem of eternity⁵³—and used it to circumscribe man's place in the world, as can be observed in his conceit comparing the physical shapes of the burial tomb and the human womb. And so, as was seen to be the case with the "Golden Epistle" and Anshelm's overlaying one set of mnemonic designs atop others, discussed in Chapter 1,⁵⁴ Browne passes from one register of mnemonic images to another (where neither overturns or cancels the other), and, by using the urn—which he allegorizes as a human body—he spins out a series of mystical and otherwise hidden meanings. The urn is made to be seen as an image of transience and as a macabre body in transit.

While many have handles, ears, and long necks, but most imitate a circular figure, in a spherick and round composure; whether from any mystery, best duration or capacity, were but a conjecture. But the common form with necks was a proper figure, making our last bed like our first; nor much unlike the Urnes of our Nativity, while we lay in the nether part of the earth, and inward vault of our Microcosme. (*Urn Burial* 3, p. 148)

This passage, which speaks of containers of the elemental part of man, absorbs into itself and encloses an appropriate mnememe as well, in the form of a fragment of Psalm 63 ("the nether part of the earth"). Browne's endeavor to engender multiple meanings by conflating two divergent symbols (whether O/X or images of tomb/womb) recalls the process by which emblems, and mnemonic devices more generally, convey their messages.⁵⁵

Like Browne we have looked to last things; and, now that we have attended to the end (or aim) of Browne's anamnestic compositional practice (animated by emblems and related melancholy designs), we can turn once more to beginnings. Let us return to the opening of Browne's essays and scrutinize the compound mnememes he marshaled to epitomize his essays even before they began. Let us begin with the sententiae prefacing each part of this enlarged *memento mori* diptych.

The first motto, from a funeral speech of sorts in Propertius, proclaims that man, in the end, amounts to no more than a handful of ashes. The quotation sums within a small space the whole of *Urn Burial*. In conjunction with the picture, however, it pushes the emblem beyond its frame and anticipates *The Garden*. The neat arrangement of the four urns establishes a series, or pattern, which is completed in the leap toward "fiveness" explored

in the essay and reflected in its five-part structure. In the light background we can see the absent fifth urn, as it were, in the empty space between and around those present, and it takes the shape—the shadow, if you will—of a cross. Further, the picture of the reticulated quincunx, or sequence of lozenges, in *Garden of Cyrus* continues along the same thematic line of extending a series from the visible to the invisible as it builds from four to five: It is composed of horizontal rows of five and then four circles, and the top and bottom, hemming in the network, are rows of five. Moreover, considering both figures in the light of the other, if we visualize the four burial urns arranged around an invisible center point, we can readily see that they resemble the arrangement of the lozenge network (Figs. 5.1 and 5.2). After all, the citation from Quintilian introducing *The Garden of Cyrus* extols the orderly arrangement of things disposed around a fixed point. This vignette of perfection involves and goes beyond visible objects. As we have seen with Browne, the introduction of things visible is often used as a springboard to the invisible, to the

superiour ingredient and obscured part of ourselves, whereto all present felicities afford no resting contentment, will be able at last to tell us we are more than our present selves; and evacuate such hopes in the fruition of their own accomplishments. (*Urn Burial* 5, p. 164)

Visible emblems like those used in Browne's text, and like the metaphors he used to supplement their meanings, point beyond themselves toward the hidden aspects of the essays they preface. Further, they point toward a mode of signification that takes into account and sublates the emblematic, which at last conveys that the work of art is more than it appears at present. And so Browne's twofold essay, like the graphic representation of the quincunx, may be apprehended at one and the same time in its germinal form (as a condensed expression of the orderly disposition of parts) and in its most expansive expression (as encapsulating the history of each individual, of mankind, and of the universe). The quincunx, according to the barrage of evidence mustered in *The Garden of Cyrus*, is the exemplary figure of perfection in nature, art, and religion. When the two symbols (O and X) are taken together, so that they combine the implications each is charged with conveying, the resulting gloss by Browne reveals the double truth of the human condition: that man, able to be reduced to ashes and enclosed in a small urn, may yet, because of the intervention of God as a man in human history, be translated into a higher, perfected form. These symbols, as mnememes, therefore provide the same reading as the essay's discursive exposition of *memento mori*. And yet it is the double aspect, at once ludic and enigmatic, that turns the reader back on his or her own thoughts and thus enables the

whole to be more than a trite or overly ingenious expression of Christian dogma. The parallel display of the essays' general themes, and their involved hieroglyphical subtext, mirrors the harmonious double movement of the macrocosm and microcosm created and overseen by God. *Urn Burial* muses on God's first intervention in human history, which brought death into the world; and *The Garden of Cyrus* on his last, the Apocalypse, which ushers in eternal life.

All things began in order, so shall they end, and so shall they begin again; according to the ordainer of order and mystical Mathematicks of the City of Heaven. . . . But who can be drowsie at that howr which freed us from everlasting sleep? or have slumbering thoughts at that time, when sleep it self must end, and as some conjecture all shall awake again? (*Garden* 5, p. 226)

God's final writing in the Book of Nature, paradoxically, will be the erasure of previous inscriptions. Browne's discourse echoes this design and, like an emblem of *memento mori*, evokes an image of the world when all mortal endeavors are as though they had not been. The moral is that, if we could apprehend a way of reading where metaphor and positive truth converged, then, recalling the unimaginable conclusion of a serpent swallowing its tail, we would have finally understood that "we have devoured our selves and yet do live and remain ourselves" (*R.M.* 1.37, p. 48). Indeed, *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*, though complete in themselves, generate an even greater work when viewed, as it were, from beyond themselves. Some aspects of the whole, like Browne's emblematic shorthand, are concealed from sight in order to express, through elements of the essays' formal design, the essentially ineffable nature of the topics addressed. This mode of composition characterizes his literary re-creation of both divine paradoxes and their hieroglyphical representations.

The world that I regard is my selfe, it is the Microcosme of mine owne frame, that I cast mine eye on; for the other, I use it but like a Globe, and turne it round sometimes for my recreation. . . . that masse of flesh that circumscribes me, limits not my mind: that surface that tells the heavens it hath an end, cannot perswade me I have any; I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty; though the number of the Arke do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my minde: whilst I study to finde how I am a Microcosme or little world, I finde my selfe something more than the great. (*R.M.* 2.11, p. 87)

Browne's description of himself as exceeding the span of the macrocosm implies a self-definition which, metaphorically at least, transcends natural

bounds. His attempt to imagine a system of reckoning beyond calibration parallels his effort to imagine meaning without measure. He wrote about and used hieroglyphs, as mnememes, and thus collapsed signifiers and signifieds; he did so to re-create an immediate sense of the divine mysteries—which for Browne was tantamount to revealing the essence of the truth of human Being. But, because he recognized that any such vision of immediacy was illusory, he developed a counterpractice of commenting self-consciously on his emblematic shorthand's limitations. And, as we might expect, he also admitted the converse, that his use of hieroglyphs temporarily effected what his discursive prose sought unsuccessfully to approximate.

Such was the practice of a man "borne in the Planetary houre of *Saturne*" who believed he had "a peece of that Leaden Planet in" him (*R.M.* 2.11, p. 88). For Browne, hieroglyphs were vestiges of, and the means to re-create, the ideality of language (before the fall of Adam, when man not only read directly from the leaves of the Book of Nature but also named them).⁵⁶ As a practice, therefore, the manipulation of mystical characters enabled him to approach the most ideal of all languages: the Word. The nostalgia for a lost unity between language and the world was melancholy indeed, especially when it was presumed from the outset to be irremediable by human artifice. Living with this paradox, and himself embodying it, he developed a form of double writing designed to make visible the invisible. Thus, as part of his discursive practice (which included its own counterpractice from within his texts), Browne wrote on the essential strife between concealment and revelation. It is not so much that truth is concealment, but rather that the setting into play of the two produces an authentic expression of what could pass for "the structure of the true." For example, mixed in with ecstatic elaboration of the universality of the quincunx is a specific, if unconventional, typological interpretation of a section of Scripture—the first of the two books from which he gathers his divinity:

And beside this kinde of work in Retiarie and hanging textures, in embroideries, and eminent needle-works; the like is obvious unto every eye in glass-windows. Nor only in Glassie contrivances, but also in Lattice and Stone-work, conceived in the Temple of *Solomon*; wherein the windows are termed *fenestræ reticulatæ*, or lights framed like nets. And agreeable unto the Greek expression concerning Christ in the Canticles, looking through the nets, which ours hath rendered, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattesse; that is, partly seen and unseen, according to the visible and invisible side of his nature. (*Garden* 2, p. 187)

The totality of Browne's topic could not be taken in by a single glance.⁵⁷ Therefore he sought a design that both reflected and could be seen through, which thus gave a new dimension to his theme. He composed *Urn Burial*

and *The Garden* so that, once a reader glimpsed some aspect of the scheme of the whole, he might then locate and admire the intricate relations among the various parts. By the same token, once the viewer became aware of one of the points, circles or trees, set in a quincuncial arrangement, he could subsequently move in such a way as to see all other points in perfect alignment. The literary counterpart and rationale for this principle of composition are found in Browne's emblematic way of writing about moral themes. For, according to Browne's analogical way of thinking, once a reader could interpret a man's double text in this way, he might then approach God's Two Books in the same way—and how much more marvelous it would be to discover such correspondences linking the world of the spirit with that of the flesh than merely to locate them in a literary work! Above all else, the literary and mystical design of Browne's ten chapters on mortality and regeneration imitates, and therefore calls attention to, the providential disposition of those elements in God's Two Books.⁵⁸

Finally, then, the Incarnation provided the divine pattern for Browne's essays, and the Christian paradox of the "fortunate fall" supplied the decorum according to which they were arranged. *Urn Burial* anticipates *The Garden of Cyrus* in the same way that the death of Adam anticipates the coming of Christ. Such an organization of events, based on a linear or narrative view of history, is, of course, grounded in *a posteriori* reasoning (where the latter comes first). It assumes that events prior to the coming of Christ take on more complex meanings—indeed, their ultimate meaning—with respect to the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Therefore Browne's use and transformation of the supreme Christian paradox can be understood only in terms of the visual and emblematic commonplaces associated with God's decussation with, and as, man. Above all else, Browne's method involved enlarging and intimating the resolution of the strife between the flesh and the spirit, the visible and the invisible.

REVIEWING MODELS OF REPRESENTING THE UNVIEWABLE

Throughout this chapter I have referred to illustrations from earlier chapters, but I have done so advisedly. Such illustrations can, at best, allude to the presentation of similar techniques and themes during the early modern period. Though I am not winding up simply to reassert correspondences among the arts, and although I do not want to resuscitate the dictum "ut pictura poesis," I would like to suggest that works of art infused by and reflecting an aesthetic of anamnesis—whether triptych, emblem, or essay—deserve further critical investigation. A comparison of the thematic, structural, and iconographic parallels in Browne's work and, say, van der Wey-

den's offers a way to reassess what I have suggested were the principal features of the aesthetic of anamnesis; and yet, at the same time I would echo Heidegger's view that "form and content are the most hackneyed concepts under which anything and everything may be subsumed."⁵⁹

Given the tendency among some literary historians of the arts to appropriate the terminology of aesthetics,⁶⁰ I would make it clear that what I am designating as the aesthetic of anamnesis refers to a mode of conceptualization and composition (whether in the fourteenth, the seventeenth, or the nineteenth century) that involves the disposition of fragments drawn from the common storehouse of inventions, which often have been preserved in essentially mnemonic forms of expression, like emblems and *sententiae*. Norman MacKenzie has sensibly summarized the main characteristics of such a style of writing, which, following Croll and Williamson, he designates as "Baroque":

"Baroque" should not be used to denote merely ornamental proliferation carried to an extreme. . . . the notions of irregularity and of outward departure from basic form were present from the very beginning when "Baroque" described a distended pearl. Fundamentally, however, Baroque involves carefully constructed compositions which employ classical features. The arrangement of classical ingredients, however, is such that they combine to embody new concepts and techniques.⁶¹

I would supplement this only by saying that the themes associated with this mode of composition often involve a self-conscious relation to the condition of melancholy and, at their base, reflect a design and an architecture that are at once mnemonic and emblematic. With these qualifications in mind, and in the spirit of discovery, we can examine MacKenzie's contention with respect to the work of the art historian Shirley Blum:

as in architecture, so it is in literature—Baroque art and literature take styles and materials used before, but they rearrange them into a new synthesis drawing inspiration from the unique currents of thought and emotion released by confrontation of the traditional, Christian world-picture with the emerging, new, scientifically accountable universe.⁶²

During the northern Renaissance, as Blum argued, painters like van der Weyden did not attempt to condense "a total thought realm onto a single panel" (p. 3). The multiplicity of units not only accommodated but actually encouraged the still medieval, analogical spirit of addition and repetition. In the same way that van der Weyden, unlike most of his contemporaries, looked to medieval iconography for his stock of images,⁶³ Browne too revived discarded forms and images in order to reanimate them with fresh

meanings. This practice shades into another feature of baroque composition: the use of fragments to structure an already fragmentary design. For example, the triptych—and specifically the articulated, or segmented, parts of the work of art—as Blum has observed (p. 4; emphasis added),

re-created certain experiences that had previously been found in medieval architecture. The spectator sees both an exterior and an interior setting; the terms themselves are derived from the language of architectural description. He first contemplates the exterior, which is less complex than the interior because it is smaller in size and simpler in iconography. When he passes from the exterior to the interior, *just as when he passes through a portal, the content and form of the exterior can be retained only in his memory, for a new visual realm is disclosed*. . . . Rather than being immediately apparent, the iconography unfolds slowly. . . . As in a medieval church, the total thought realm is not revealed until all the parts have been experienced. Only in the mental synthesis of the interior and exterior is the full content comprehended.

The architectural analogies used here, like those integral to the construction of memory palaces, may also help explain the experience of what happens when we read Browne's *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*. My interest here is not in a critical assessment of the "reader's response" but rather in the disposition of mnememes within a work of art, meticulously devised and deposited as one might appoint a memory theater for someone else to retrieve later.⁶⁴ After encountering and passing beyond the emblem, the entry gate as it were, of *Urn Burial* and *Garden of Cyrus*, the reader confronts first the exterior, the rich surface of the prose with its rising and falling periods. Then, at some point, the viewer becomes aware of the curling metaphors and elaborate symbolic matrices within the text; and then of the cryptically encoded messages that point to a larger emblematic scheme organizing the entire work. I would emphasize here that, as with the emblem and with double *portraits macabres*, the world set up through the artwork is grounded in an aesthetic of anamnesis. The fragmented composition of the work, as well as the depicted icons which served a commemorative function (like Mary Magdalene's vessel and John the Baptist's book [Figs. 4.40 and 4.41]), call on the spectator's ability to recollect and assimilate the disparate parts, as well as to fit into an interpretative schema the rhetoric of the images that is made present through the shining forth of the artwork.⁶⁵ If one is to achieve a consummate reading of the entire piece, the spectator must rely on retroactive and projective memory to bring together—already with an idea of the whole in mind—the disparate elements given over to the viewer's perception. The baroque work of art is usually constructed with this in mind; thus the viewer's gaze is directed toward those areas of discontinuity, in contradistinction to what happens

when one encounters a more classical, mimetically consonant work of art. In the case of anamorphic paintings, for example, the spectator's attention is directed to the oddly proportioned image that interrupts the otherwise orderly arranged picture (Fig. 4.31); and, in the case of the triptych, when it is closed and the two back panels form a single symmetrical unit, to the hinge space between the panels (Fig. 4.38 and 4.39).

The spectator needs also to rely on his memory to unify the iconographic and verbal elements of composition. Mottoes and sententiae float among van der Weyden's images much as emblematic conceits and hieroglyphs course through Browne's prose. Both use the double registers of image and text to communicate what neither system could say by itself. In this way, both van der Weyden and Browne convey something about the double nature of man that an image alone or words alone could not express. Further, the material element (the medium) on, by, and through which the artwork comes into being (and thus opens up a world) is not hidden or occluded from the spectator's gaze; rather, its materiality often is thematized and, from within the work itself, attention is called to its obviously constructed nature. Thus, in a work of art governed by principles of an amnesic aesthetic, often some aspect of God's grand design is intimated or reproduced through the intermingling of the content and the form of presentation. Providential disposition is imitated through the artist's arrangement of the elements composing his composition.

In the work of baroque prose, like Browne's diptychal essays, the strife between concealment and unconcealment, between the invisible and the visible, between the spirit and the flesh—just as that between word and image in the emblem, and just as the folding in of the triptych panels gives to the whole a more complicated and enriched meaning—emerges from an aesthetic of anamnesis. It takes its grounding from the earlier, medieval world view associated with complex webs of analogical and allegorical relations. Browne's looking back to the essence of the truth of language in hieroglyphics and also through God's mystic writing pad, like van der Weyden's appropriation of medieval icons, does not necessarily imply a lack of imagination, nor is it simply humanistic *imitatio*. Instead, as an aspect of applied emblematics, it exemplifies the amnesic practice of searching through the storehouse of inventions, disposing the located materials, and, by virtue of transporting them to a new context, reanimating them with new and resplendent implications.

These new attributes and values pull along with them the trace of those previously ascribed to the invention, conceit, or mnememe, even though they seem to have sublated and subsumed the prior connotations. We have seen this to be the case with the reinscription of sententiae and exempla in baroque prose. And so it was that, during the early modern period, ruins

became a favorite theme for reflecting on the vagaries of fortune and the passage of time in whatever medium one chose to moralize them. Whether in verse, translated into a commonplace book, or rendered in vivid colors, representations of fragments from the past were, as Browne wrote, "*memento's* of mortality unto the living passengers." They served to remind every man of his own inevitable future passing. But more importantly, such ruins, transvalued now as memorials, became simulacra for conventional conceits to the extent that, irrespective of their previous or particular meanings, they conjured a sense of nostalgia, a longing for an idealized home—whether in this world or the next.

Such fragments depict, and themselves are, expressions of transience. Further, insofar as they are mementos of mortality, they activate man's desire to endure in the face of his own decay—a melancholy prospect which is buttressed further by the certain knowledge of man's fallen condition and the signs all around him of the decay of the world in which he lives.⁶⁶

Oblivion is not to be hired: The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the Register of God, not in the record of man. . . . The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Aequinox? Every houre adds unto that current Arithmetique, which scarce stands one moment. . . . Darknesse and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings. (*Urn* 5, pp. 167–68)

How then are we to approach the task of representing "the uncomfortable night of nothing" (*Urn* 5, p. 167)? Browne's emblematic conceits expressed both his divine aspirations and his recognition of the illimitable and virtually unimaginable distance of his projected goal. In the process of his writing—and with respect to his exposition of things that were literally and metaphorically true—Browne recorded his effort to gain some kind of understanding of the idea of his eventual annihilation. This implied that he understood his place in the world as a being-toward-death. It was through Browne's striving with his prose that each raised the other into the self-assertion of their natures, and thus each carried the other beyond itself.

For Browne was not simply an artist setting in place a series of emblematic mirrors for viewing and recollecting aspects of the truth of Being-in-the-world; also, he was himself the material, the grounding, of his artifice and the earth of his composition. Browne, reminiscent of Montaigne, claimed: "The world that I regard is myself." Browne achieves an opening up of a view onto the fallen world—it is a lucid, resplendent, and enlightening view but one ultimately recognized as being momentary and thereby imbued with melancholy. Such a vision, like all mortal constructions, like

all things created in and of the fallen world, must collapse and decay. And yet Browne saw that this thought too ultimately must be undone as well and must therefore be evacuated of its melancholy meaning. Such a turning back on itself of the very concept that Browne ostensibly presented as being fixed and immutable takes on its greatest clarity, and shines forth most brilliantly, in the penultimate chapter of *Urn Burial*, a part of which we have already encountered in our (calculated) approach to this moment:

It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature; or that there is no further state to come, unto which this seemes progressionall, and otherwise made in vaine; Without this accomplishment the naturall expectation and desire of such a state, were but a fallacy in nature; unsatisfied Considerators would quarrell the justice of their constitutions, and rest content that *Adam* had fallen lower, whereby knowing no other Originall, and deeper ignorance of themselves, they might have enjoyed the happiness of inferior Creatures; who in tranquility possesse their Constitutions, as having not the apprehension to deplore their own natures. And being framed below the circumference of these hopes, or cognition of better being, the wisdom of God hath necessitated their Contentment: But the superiour ingredient and obscured part of our selves, whereto all present felicities afford no resting contentment, will be able at last to tell us we are more than our present selves; and evacuate such hopes in the fruition of their own accomplishments. (*Urn Burial* 4, pp. 163–64)

By becoming conscious of our own self-consciousness, we catch a glimpse of ourselves attending to this process. The image Browne leaves us with is that of the invisible “part of ourselves,” which reminds us that although we are more than what we presently see ourselves as being, still we are but a handful of ashes. Such a presentation exceeds the prospects of any simple *memento mori* emblem where the spectator is charged to remember what is to come. Only in the projected “future perfect” are one’s hopes for futurity realized, and only through the mediation of similitudes—whether as metaphors, parables, emblematic mirrors, or full-fledged allegories—can one thus see himself.

Browne recognized that anything man might discover about himself through metaphors alone is necessarily framed by, and constructed in terms of, what he already knows—in terms of his allegories of the real, his maps of mortality.⁶⁷ Thus his combined literary and mystical design called for his setting at odds notions of the visible and the invisible, observing them exchange places and thence pass beyond themselves. Browne’s texts succeed in opening up for us a space from within which we can consider the place we occupy every day, between the visible and the invisible worlds.

Within the world set up by Browne’s literary artwork, he would have us

realize and recognize that knowledge is not easy to attain, because we acquire it in bits and pieces, anamnesticly. Therefore, objects of knowledge (including, and especially, ourselves) always come to us mediated and incomplete, if not distorted from their "true" and essential being. Such a melancholy recognition is the circle within which we spin our words and fret our days until, twisting beyond its centrifugal force and turning upon a trope, we cross over into another set of circles entirely and enter the shining of the world opened up by Browne's work of art, his enlarged *memento mori* diptych. Seen in this way *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus* comprise a map (at once allegorically layered and empirically grounded) that brings together, conveys, and points beyond disparate mnemonic mirrors which reflect—even as they embody and, metaphorically speaking, transfigure—the certain knowledge of our end.

Postliminary

And, therefore, although we be measured by the Zone of time, and the flowing and continued instants thereof, do weave at last a line and circle about the eldest: yet can we not thus commensurate the sphere of *Trismegistus*, or sum up the unsuccessive and stable duration of God.

—THOMAS BROWNE, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* 7.3

Upon taking leave of a Memory Palace known as *Mapping Mortality*, I would entreat you to recall whatever has been found most rare or remarkable in its “*Roomes and Galleries*,” each “trim’d / With *Emblemes*, and with *Pictures* fairly lim’d,” that were “drawne from those neat *Peeeces*, which do lurke / Within the *Closets* of this *Authors worke*” (Fig. 3.1); and to review a mnemonic design (known as the Appendix) which offers a way to keep in mind the main headings—and, ideally, the arguments of each—even after you have closed this book. Reader, fare well.

Appendix



Notes



PRELIMINARY REMARKS

1. Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, in *The Works of Francis Bacon*, collected and edited by James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1863) 6:282.

2. Here and in what follows I am indebted to Clark Hulse, who urged me to clarify my argument along these lines.

3. Insofar as Heidegger's discussion of death in *Being and Time* is grounded in the philosophical tradition of Aristotle, as it was synthesized and transformed by Aquinas and refashioned by Martin Luther, his excursus on the theme is especially apt to be introduced into our own contemporary critical discourse about Renaissance *mentalité*; see Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), paras. 68–69, pp. 385–416). I have made an effort to use Heidegger's thoughtful treatment of this theme in those places where his rigorous development of critical language enables me to use his terminology in just as critical a sense. At the same time, throughout my study (and especially in Chapter 5) it may be that my analysis of being and time in the early modern period will help to shed light on, and serve as a gloss for, aspects of Heidegger's own project concerning the fundamental question, which for *Being and Time* is the question of being.

4. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, paras. 50–51, pp. 293–99. See also Charles E. Scott, *The Language of Difference* (1987; rpt., Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1989), pp. 55–63. Though not wanting to put too fine a point on it, I would mention in passing that this formulation of the issue can be observed to shift after *Being and Time*—and even within it. That is to say (and here I am indebted to Francis Degrin): within *Being and Time*, Dasein, as an access point, is displaced; thus Dasein's mortality is displaced; thus Being itself is displaced.

5. Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 11.

6. Ibid.: "Memory is the gathering of recollection, thinking back. It safely keeps and keeps concealed within it that to which at each given time thought must be given before all else, in everything that essentially is, everything that appeals to us as what has being and has been in being. Memory, Mother of the Muses—the thinking back to what is to be thought is the source and ground of poesy. This is why poesy is the water that at times flows backward toward the source, toward thinking as a thinking back, a recollection. Surely, as long as we take the view that logic gives us any information about what thinking is, we shall never be able to think how much all poesy rests upon thinking back, recollection. Poetry wells up only from devoted thought thinking back, recollecting."

7. See, for example, Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Padua, 1611), p. 335. For a recent visual lexicon taking into account variations in conventional iconography from 1400 to 1800, see Norma Cecchini, *Dizionario sinottico di iconologia* (1976; rpt., Bologna: Casa Editrice Pàtron, 1982), p. 131.

8. See, for example, Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, *Hieroglyphica* (Lyons, 1602), sig. E, p. 49.

9. Other pairings of images along the margins of this section of Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book—pairings which can be found as topical headings in Renaissance commonplace books—include Measure and Excess; Industry and Sloth; Understanding and Ignorance; Sobriety and Voluptuousness. This method was quite typical during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See, for example, John Foxe's *Pandectae Locorum communium* (London, 1572), sig. A3, where, under the heading "Adolescentia," we find also "vitia, virtutes"; and see also Ruth Mohl's study, *John Milton and His Commonplace Book* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1969), p. 62, which notes that the pairing of opposites, derived from the Aristotelian origin of the making of commonplace books, is demonstrated, among other places, in Milton's own commonplace book and in his *Art of Logic* (1672).

10. On the origins and transformations of this trope, see Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 33-45.

11. On memory in the Renaissance, see Ludwig Volkmann, *Ars Memorativa*, from the *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* (Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1929); Carroll Camden, "Memory, the Warder of the Brain," *Philological Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (January 1939), 52-72; Paolo Rossi, "Immagini e memoria locale nei secoli XVI e XV," *Revista critica di storia della filosofia*, fasc. II (1958), 149-91, and "La costruzione della immagini nei tratti di memoria artificiale del Rinascimento," in *Umanesimo e Simbolismo*, ed. E. Castelli (Padua, 1958), pp. 161-78, and, more recently, Rossi's book—which brings together the topics of his previous articles—*Clavis Universalis: Arti della memoria e logica combinatoria de Lullo a Leibniz* (Bologna: Mulino, 1983); Harry Caplan, "Memoria: Treasure House of Eloquence" (1965), reprinted in *Of Eloquence: Studies in Ancient and Mediaeval Rhetoric* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970); Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London, 1966; rpt., Penguin Books, 1978); Helga Hajdu, *Das Mnemotechnische Schrifttum des Mittelalters* (Amsterdam: E. J. Bonset, 1967); Herwig Blum, *Die Antike Mnemotechnik* (New York: Georg Olms, 1969); Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York, 1984; rpt., Penguin Books, 1986); and Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*.

On emblems, see Mario Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery* (London, 1939; 2nd ed., Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1964); Henri Stegemeier, "Problems in Emblem Literature," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 45, no. 1 (January 1946), 26-37; Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (1948; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1978); Robert J. Clements, *Picta Poesis: Literary and Humanistic Theory in Renaissance Emblem Books* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1960); Peter Daly, *Literature in the Light of the Emblem: Structural Parallels between the Emblem and Literature in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1973); and Karl Joseph Höltgen, *Aspects of the Emblem: Studies in the English Emblem Tradition and the European Context* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1986).

And, on melancholy, see George Williamson, "Mutability, Decay, and Jacobean Melancholy" (1935), reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Contexts* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960); Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642* (1951; rpt., East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1965), and *Sanity in Bedlam: A Study of Robert Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy"* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1959); Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1964); Brigit Gellert Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy: Studies in Literary Treatments of Melancholy in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971); and M. A. Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy: The Wisdom of the "Essais"* (Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press, 1984).

12. See James H. Marrow, "In desen speigell: A New Form of 'Memento Mori' in Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Art," in *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1983), pp. 154-63.

13. On the spatial play of perspective, see, for example, Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphoses ou magic artificielle des effets merveilleux* (Paris: Oliver Perrin, 1969); and Fred Leeman, *Hidden Images: Games of Perception, Anamorphic Art, and Illusion from the Renaissance to the Present*, trans. Ellyn Childs Allison and Margaret L. Kaplan (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1976). On the temporal play of perspective as it pertains to epic poetry, see Ronald R. Macdonald, *The Burial-Places of Memory: Epic Underworlds in Vergil, Dante, and Milton* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987); Galbraith Miller Crump, *The Mystical Design of "Paradise Lost"* (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1975); and Rosalie L. Colie, "Time and Eternity: Paradox and Structure in *Paradise Lost*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23 (1960), 127-38.

14. Cf. Ernest B. Gilman, *The Curious Perspective: Literary and Pictorial Wit in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978); Murray Roston, *Renaissance Perspectives in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); John Greenwood, *Shifting Perspectives and the Stylish Style: Mannerism in Shakespeare and His Jacobean Contemporaries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

15. Jacques Derrida, "Différance," in *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. David B. Allison (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 129, and see pp. 130-60 for further clarification of "différance."

16. *The Essayes; or, Morall, Politicke, and Militarie Discourses of Lo: Michael de Montaigne*, trans. John Florio, 3 vols. (1603; rpt., London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1965); cf. *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Albert Thibaudet and Maurice Rat (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1962), p. 1071, and *The "Essays" of Montaigne*, trans. Donald Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 837. Florio translates as "frame" Montaigne's verb "forger," which Frame renders as "make."

17. Tom Conley, *The Graphic Unconscious in Early Modern French Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

18. It is axiomatic that a map, like a parable, outlines and describes a series of correspondences that are self-consistent within the realm they mark out. See Charles S. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover, 1955), pp. 104-19.

19. See Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: New Left Books, 1977), p. 166; Alberto Vaca, "Vanitas": *Il simbolismo del tempo* (Bergamo: Galleria Lorenzelli, 1981); and Philippe Ariès, *Images de l'homme devant la mort* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1983), esp. pp. 162-99.

20. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, pp. 166-72; Jean-Luc Nancy, "Wild Laughter in the Throat of Death," *Modern Language Notes* 102, no. 4 (September 1987), 719-36.

21. *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes, 4 vols. (1928; rev. ed., London: Faber and Faber, 1964), 1:167-68. Other exemplary expressions of the decay of the world may be found in the poem of Book V of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and John Donne's "The anatomy of the world" in *The First Anniversarie*. See Victor Harris, *All Coherence Gone* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), esp. pp. 86-131; and Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1969).

22. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, n. 60, and as is mentioned in passing in Chapter 1, n. 1, I use the term "baroque" to signify at once a temporal category and an ahistorical stylistic designation. In my analysis "baroque" conveys: those characteristic impulses, if not a range of stylistic techniques, underlying and informing an essentially amnestically oriented attitude toward composition and one's relation to the resulting work of art. For a comprehensive survey of the issue of terminology and an analysis of its implica-

tions for literary studies, see John M. Steadman, *Redefining a Period Style: "Renaissance," "Mannerist," and "Baroque" in Literature* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1990). Especially useful for my assessment of the issue have been James V. Mirollo, *Mannerism and Renaissance Poetry: Concept, Mode, Inner Design* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 1-71; and José Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. Terry Cochran (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

23. Cf. Frank Huntley, "Sir Thomas Browne: The Relationship of *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*," *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956), 204-19.

CHAPTER ONE

1. I use the term "baroque" here in passing to signify a temporal category and also an ahistorical stylistic designation; see Preliminary Remarks, n. 22, and also Chapter 5, n. 60. Also, on my insistence here to speak conscientiously about "traces"—and the traces of the effacement of traces—so as to be able, in what follows, to speak critically and truthfully about memory in the early modern period, see Emmanuel Lévinas, *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 37-39; and Robert Bernasconi, "The Trace of Levinas in Derrida," *Derrida & Difference*, ed. David Wood and Robert Bernasconi (Coventry: Parousia Press, 1985), pp. 17-44.

2. Contemporary empirical studies indicate that mnemonic devices are of two main types: organizational and encoded. See Francis S. Bellezza, "Mnemonic Devices and Memory Schemas," in *Imagery and Related Mnemonic Processes*, ed. Mark A. McDaniel and Michael Pressley (New York: Springer, 1987), p. 35, and "The Spatial-Arrangement Mnemonic," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 75, no. 6 (1983), 830-37. The first type provides a background on which new information can be arranged and interrelated for later recall. The second type refers to the icons, commonplace images, private hieroglyphics, or fragments of memorable *sententiae*. Encoded mnemonics are used to transform what is termed "low imagery," or abstract material, into a more memorable form so an organizational mnemonic can be set up to store that information. Whenever a substitute word or symbol is created for an abstract expression or for a number, it becomes a mental cue for the original item.

3. Ursula Schlegel, "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel," in *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes*, ed. James Stubblebine (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), p. 182, cites Scardeonius's *De antiquitate urbis Patavii* (1560). Reginaldo Scrovegni may well have been thought of as a usurer by contemporaries for he was placed in the seventh circle of Dante's *Inferno* (canto 17).

4. Michel Alpatoff, "The Parallelism of Giotto's Paduan Frescoes," in *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes*, ed. James Stubblebine (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), p. 157.

5. James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1985), p. 102.

6. On the order of "reading" of the panels, see Francesca D'Arcais, "Giotto and the Scrovegni Chapel," in *Giotto: Architect of Color and Form*, ed. Jacqueline and Maurice Guillaud (Paris and New York: Guillaud Editions, 1987), pp. 57-61; on the correspondence of various frescoes and on the relation of the narrative sequences, see Alpatoff, "The Parallelism of Giotto's Paduan Frescoes."

7. See Julia Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy," in *Desire and Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez, ed. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 216. The decorum implicit in the "image" and "place" memory systems was well known during the Renaissance; among the most articulate and influential expositors were Giulio Camillo, *L'idea del teatro* (Florence,

1550); and John Willis, *Mnemonica; or, The Art of Memory* (London, 1661), which first appeared in Latin in 1621. Unless otherwise stated, future quotations refer to the English edition of 1661.

8. Yates, *Art of Memory*, pp. 101-2.

9. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1922; rpt., 1979), 11.2.20.

10. The other twelve figures in this allegorical program are: Hope and Despair, Faith and Infidelity, Justice and Injustice, Temperance and Anger, Fortitude and Inconstancy, Prudence and Stupidity.

11. See Preliminary Remarks, n. 9.

12. William Fulwood, *The Castel of Memorie* (London, 1573), sig. F5v. Unless indicated otherwise, future quotations follow this edition; occasionally I have followed the 1562 version because some key passages were clearer in that printing.

13. Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (1965; rpt., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p. 122. On Sidney's understanding and possible use of the memory arts, see Jan van Dorsten, "Arts of Memory and Poetry," *English Studies* 48 (1967), 419-25.

14. Richard Mulcaster, *Positions . . . for the Training up of Children* (London, 1581), sig. Aa2v.

15. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 3.17.31; and Fulwood, *Castel of Memorie*, sig. F8v. Future citations from the *locus classicus* of the memory arts, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, attributed to Cicero in the Latin Middle Ages, will follow the Loeb edition, translated by Harry Caplan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954), and will be identified by abbreviated title, book, chapter, and section numbers.

16. See Hugh Plat, *The Jewell House of Art and Nature* (London, 1594), sig. N1v, p. 82, which questions critically the mnemonic methods advocated by Alexander Dickson, *De Umbra Rationis* (London, 1583).

17. Roberto Salvini, *Giotto: The Scrovegni Chapel at Padua* (Florence: Arnaud, 1953), p. 23.

18. Alpatoff, "The Parallelism of Giotto's Paduan Frescoes," pp. 157, 165.

19. Elizabeth McCutcheon, "Sir Nicholas Bacon's Great House Sententiae," *English Literary Renaissance Supplements*, no. 3 (1977). We shall return to this theme in Chapter 3, with respect to Montaigne's Library of Memory.

20. See Norman K. Farmer, Jr., *Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), chap. 7, "Lady Drury's Oratory: The Painted Closet from Hawstead Hall," p. 78.

21. Because the room has been dismantled and relocated (at the Branch Museum, Christchurch Mansion, in Ipswich), it is impossible to determine if a designated sequence for reading the emblems originally was intended for forty-three emblems, together with the fifteen panels depicting emblematic trees and plants (appearing at the bottom of the horizontal rows), and for the remaining, purely decorative, panels.

22. The images are arranged as follows: (1) four vertical rows of panels by four horizontal, (2) two vertical rows of four panels, (3) one vertical row of five panels, (4) two vertical rows of four, (5) three vertical rows of four, and (6) three vertical rows of four. Memory theaters, owing to the way they supplied convenient and distinct places to sort out and organize bits of information, enabled one to situate "All Histories, Actions, Fables, common Affaires" (p. 74); for, as Willis advocated, all kinds "of *Hyeroglyphicks*, and innumerable sentences ingeniously exemplified, may be repositied" (p. 78).

23. Willis, *Mnemonica* (1621), sigs. B11-C1. These same principles of intellectual distillation were called upon once again when Willis devised his celebrated stenographic

method. Both his *Art of Memory* and his text on "compendious writing" (as he termed it), which reduced complex ideas to their most elementary components—whether visual or linguistic—evidently circulated widely. At the time of his death in 1628, his *Art of Stenographie; or, Short Writing by Spelling Characters* (first published in London, 1602) was in its ninth edition. By the midcentury, it was in its fourteenth edition, had been translated into Latin, and had generated a companion text, *The School-maister to the art of stenography* (1622, 1628, and 1647).

24. A. M. Guite, "The Art of Memory and the Art of Salvation: the Centrality of Memory in the Sermons of John Donne and Lancelot Andrewes," *Seventeenth Century Studies* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1989), 1-17.

25. Daniel Featley, *Clavis Mystica: A Key Opening Divers Difficult and Mysterious Texts of Holy Scripture; Handled in Seventy Sermons . . .* (London, 1636). All citations from the thirty-fifth sermon ("Four Rowes") in this collection of seventy follow the Huntington Library's edition (#19969) and will be identified by page number in parentheses.

26. See Joan Marie Lechner, *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplaces* (New York: Pageant Press, 1962), pp. 70, 137, 150-52; and Miriam Joseph, "Topics of Invention" in *Rhetoric in Shakespeare's Time* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962).

27. As is indicated in a margin note, by "Cornificius" Featley means *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3: "Constat artificiosa memoria ex locis & imaginibus."

28. See, for example, Willis, *Mnemonica* (1661), sigs. C4-C6.

29. See Frances A. Yates, "The Emblematic Conceit in Giordano Bruno's *De gli eroici furori* and in the Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943), 101-21, esp. 103-5; and also Paul E. Memmo, Jr., "Giordano Bruno's *De gli eroici furori* and the Emblematic Tradition," *Romantic Review* 55 (February 1964), 1-15.

30. See Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 10.2.

31. Among the many expressions of this typological image in the Renaissance (of Aaron as a kind of mediator between God and the Church) that attest to its status as familiar commonplace, see John Marbeck, *A Booke of Notes and Commonplaces* (London, 1581), sig. T8v.

32. See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 48-49.

33. The method of using places of memory to inaugurate and supplement biblical study aids and meditation techniques was fundamental to the major developments in theology spanning the Reformation and Counterreformation. For example, Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* uses "places" as "points of meditation" to call to mind moments and "stages" in the life of Christ. His exercises were intended for lay brothers as well as cloistered monks. Similarly, the organizational mnemonic used by Teresa of Avila in her aid to prayer and meditation is reminiscent of the place system advocated in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The structure of her artificial memory plan is an interior castle, or many-chambered palace (*Castillo Interior o Las Moradas*), which consists of seven dwelling places divided into two sections. The first three groups concern what is achieved through human efforts and the ordinary help of grace; the remaining four deal with the passive, or mystical, elements of the spiritual life. See Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodrigues (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 19. On the interweaving of spiritual traditions and mnemonic principles in "las moradas interiores," see Fernando R. de la Flor, *Teatro de la Memoria: siete ensayos sobre mnemotecnica Española de los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y Leon, 1988), pp. 91-98.

34. Anthony Hoskins, *The Following of Christ . . . with the Epistle of Saint Bernard* (1615), which was written under the protective pseudonym of B.F. and published at St. Omer's College. The translator understates the case when he apologizes at the end: "This Lesson was brought vnto me in English, of an old translation, rough and rude, with request to amend it. I thought lesse labour to write new the whole, which I haue done according to the meaning of

the Author, though not word for word: and in diuers places added some things following upon the same, to make the matter more sententious and full" (sig. T5).

35. See Peter Iselburg's *Emblemata Politica* (1640) to get a sense of his usual method for verse moralization of commonplace images.

36. All translations are mine; however, I am indebted to Joel Harrington for helping me identify some of the letters and for clarifying many of the key terms in their historical context.

37. Exod. 13:16: "It shall bee a signe unto thee upon thine hand and so a memoriall between thine eyes." The full title of the text clarifies the book's overt mnemonic design: "*Ashrea: or the Grove of Beatitude, Represented in Emblemes: And by the Art of Memory, To be read on our Blessed SAVIOUR Crucified: With Considerations and Meditations suitable to every BEATITUDE, and to the holy time of LENT.*" The principles underlying the arts of memory as they pertain to *Ashrea* (and treated in conjunction with the other prominent Catholic emblem book of the period, Henry Hawkins's *Partheneia Sacra*) are outlined by Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (1948; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1978), pp. 198-203.

38. "The Gloues," from *Broadsides and Ballads*, Herber Collection; Huntington Library, #18343.

39. Poems were frequently used as memory aids in the Renaissance, whether for recalling the rules of grammar or for commercial mathematics. At the same time "The Gloves" circulated, an alphabetical mnemonic poem designed to accomplish similar ends was also available: "An ABC to the christen congregacion / Or pathe way to the heavenly habitation" (STC 18310).

40. James Mackay, *A History of Modern English Coinage: Henry VII to Elizabeth II* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), pp. 34-37.

41. Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), p. 531.

42. See Sara Levitt, *Victorians Unbuttoned: Registered Designs for Clothing, Their Makers and Wearers, 1839-1900* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), pp. 20-22.

43. Felix Barker and Peter Jackson, *The History of London in Maps* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1990), pp. 118-19.

44. See Richard Cavell, "Representing Writing: The Emblem as (Hiero)glyph," in *The European Emblem*, ed. Bernard F. Scholtz, Michael Bath, and David Weston (Leiden: Brill, 1990), pp. 167-90.

45. Thomas Wilson, *The arte of Rhetorique* (1560), ed. G. H. Mair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 172.

46. Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 111.

47. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 113, 122.

48. Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence Conteyning the Figures of Grammar and Rhetorick* (London, 1577), sig. B1v.

49. See also Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*, p. 170.

50. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), facs. rpt. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1970), p. 189. See also Lee A. Sonnino, *A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 181-83, and, on the emblem as a figure of comparison from classical rhetoric which was viewed as the visual half of a similitude that compares a situation with a picture, p. 251.

51. Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (1947; rpt., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, n.d.), chap. 3, "Ut Pictura Poesis and Functional Sensuous Imagery," esp. p. 58.

52. *Timber: or, Discoveries* (1641), in *Complete Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson (Oxford, 1947), 8:621.
53. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 175.
54. Jean-Louis Baudry, "Cinéma: effets idéologiques produits par l'appareil de base," *Cinéthique*, no. 7/8 (1970), 1–8 (translated by Alan Williams as "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," *Film Quarterly* 28, no. 2 [1973/74], 39–47). I am indebted to Dalia Judovitz for pointing out the importance of this essay for my project.
55. See Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Avon, 1965), pp. 312–44. This text is a reprint of the *Standard Edition*, vols. 4 and 5 (London, 1953).
56. As I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapters, especially the opening of Chapter 5, Plato's theory of knowledge is based on remembrance (anamnesis). See Francis M. Cornford, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge (the "Theaetetus" and the "Sophist" of Plato)* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), and Blum, *Die Antike Mnemotechnik*.
57. A. R. Luria, *A Little Book about a Vast Memory: The Mind of a Mnemonist*, trans. Lynn Solotaroff (1969; rpt., London: Basic Books, 1968), pp. 31–32.
58. Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo . . . nel quale si ragiona del modo di accrescere, & conseruar la Memoria* (Venice, 1586), sig. E1v. The reproduction of Romberch's illustration appears on sig. E3v.
59. Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, trans. William Weaver (San Diego and New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), p. 5.
60. Another version of an artificial memory discussed in a work of contemporary fiction is the "litttle study" of Dr. Agliè in Umberto Eco, *Foucault's Pendulum*, trans. William Weaver (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990), pp. 235–40: "His gaze wandered the ceiling as he spoke, but it seemed to me that the path his eyes followed was neither idle nor random, that they were reading, in those images, what he only pretended to be digging from his memory" (p. 240).
61. See Anthony Wilden's introduction to his translation of Lacan's *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), pp. xii–xiii.
62. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 121.
63. William Fulwood, *Castel of Memorie* (London, 1562), sig. H6.
64. Michael Macrone first suggested I develop the broader implications of this distinction.
65. Giovanni Brancacci, *Ars Memoriae Vindicata* (1702), sigs. K5–O4, contains a system for recalling every chapter of each book in the Bible using key words arranged in a memorable sequence.
66. *Rationarium Evangelistarum omnia in se evangelia prosa, versu imaginibusque quam mirifici complectens* came from the shop of Thomas Anshelm of Pforzheim in Badea (1502, 1504, 1505, 1508, 1510, 1522, 1532); see Franza Thoma, "The Relation between Petrus of Rosenheim to the Xylographia of the *ars memorandi* and to the Early Printings of the *Rationarium Evangelistarum*," an excerpt from *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* (Leipzig, 1929).
67. Hallowed by a long tradition, the symbols of the evangelists derive from the four winged creatures mentioned in Ezek. 1:5–14 and Revelation 3: an eagle for John, a man for Matthew, a lion for Mark, and an ox for Luke. This seems to have been commonplace knowledge in the Renaissance; see, for example, Filippo Gesualdo, *Plutosofia . . . nella quale si spiega l'Arte della Memoria* (Venice, 1600), sig. G1v, which discusses the symbols of the evangelists as mnemonic backgrounds in the light of other obvious "ready-made" units (like the five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).
68. Plutarch, *Moralia*, "The Education of Children," 1.9, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (1927; rpt., London and Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 45.

69. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard Trask (San Diego, New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959), esp. pp. 32, 45, 94, 104.
70. *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Keynes, 1:163.
71. Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.2.55, "Cygnæ cantio."
72. Walter Raleigh, *History of the World* (London, 1614), sig. 5Z5. See Arnold Stein, *The House of Death: Messages from the English Renaissance* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 216, for a somewhat different assessment of this passage (where death "sums up the wisdom of the world")—a point of difference emblematic of how our projects differ. Though we both situate select literary remains within a broader cultural context so we moderns can gain access to typical Renaissance ways of thinking about death, we differ most in our approaches to the end of received views on the Humanist tradition (which become more pronounced in our respective treatments of Montaigne). Stein discerns what he classifies as "messages" of celebrated individual poets "as they express and renew some of our best knowledge and self-knowledge" (p. xi), and of "the old pattern of 'all must die' and the new scene of the individual death," Stein is concerned primarily with how "individual writers have their own ways of responding to the old and the new . . . [f]or the old may not only be unforgettable, it may continue to speak with and against the new and the newer and prevent the mind from closing its books on what has been and can be convincingly felt" (p. 16).
73. Augustine, *De trinitate* 10.11.18, in *Patrologia Latina* (Paris, 1845), vol. 42, col. 983.
74. *An Introduction to the wysdome, made by Lodouicus Viues*, trans. Rycharde Morysine (London, 1540), sig. A5v.
75. *The Works of John Donne*, ed. Henry Alford (London, 1839), 4:528. See Robert L. Hickey, "Donne's Art of Memory," *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 3 (1953), 30–34.

CHAPTER TWO

1. See Chapter 1, n. 2.
2. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, para. 41, pp. 235–41, "Dasein's Being as Care"; para. 57, pp. 319–25, "Conscience as the Call of Care"; para. 65, pp. 370–80, "Temporality as the Ontological Meaning of Care."
3. All citations from *Paradise Lost* follow *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957). The phrases just quoted appear in the opening section of the poem, pp. 211–12.
4. See the Miltonic justification "why the Poem Rimes not" in *Milton*, ed. Hughes, p. 210.
5. This way of characterizing the problems attending philosophical efforts to grasp the ungraspable (namely, death) is instrumental to the theoretical trajectory toward which this study moves steadily from the opening of this chapter (which was made possible by Chapter 1's having isolated and historicized the early modern trace of memory, writing, and death) to the conclusion of Chapter 5. Specifically, in this paragraph, I am condensing and building on arguments elaborated by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, para. 38, pp. 219–24; paras. 45–53, pp. 231–311; para. 71, pp. 421–23. Taking as a point of departure Heidegger's analysis—concerning the complicated but fundamental point regarding the possibility of the very feat of grasping (the ungraspable) being an impossibility—my study also moves steadily toward later formations of this line of thinking, namely, the early writings of Derrida, with which the theoretical developments of this chapter primarily are concerned. Unvoiced in my present analysis but acknowledged here nonetheless is the presence of Lévinas's critique of Heidegger.

ger's assessment of "being-toward-death" (death as the limit of idealism); Emmanuel Lévinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. R. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987).

6. Among the studies that have been a springboard for my own inquiry are Robert B. White, Jr., "Milton's Allegory of Sin and Death: A Commentary on Backgrounds," *Modern Philology* 70 (1972-73), 337-41; Roland Mushat Frye, *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts: Iconographic Tradition in the Epic Poems* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 113-18; and Cherrell Guilfoyle, "'If Shape It Might Be Call'd That Shape Had None': Aspects of Death in Milton," *Milton Studies* 13 (1978), 35-58.

7. For a study that isolates these issues in the way I propose, but with a focus on the more traditional iconographic depictions of Death in late medieval poetry and not with reference to Milton, see Claude Blum, "Recherches sur les fonctions épistémologiques d'un représentation allégorique: l'exemple de l'apparition en Occident de l'allégorie de la Mort en squelette," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 15 (1985), 13-27.

8. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 120. See Chapter 1, pp. 46-54, for a discussion of this principle as it pertains to the construction of artificial memory systems.

9. Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 57.

10. For a detailed investigation of this theme that extends the implications of such an approach beyond the scope of my project, see Herman Rapaport, *Milton and the Postmodern* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

11. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

12. Mitchell Stephens, "Jacques Derrida Has Death on His Mind," *New York Times Magazine*, January 23, 1994, p. 25.

13. Cf. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, pp. 101-22.

14. Here I am simplifying and extending Derrida's contention in "Meaning and Soliloquy" that visibility and spatiality (as such) only can destroy the self-presence of the will and spiritual animation that opens up discourse. "They are literally the death of that self-presence." See Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 35.

15. Jacques Derrida, "The Ellipsis of the Sun: Enigmatic, Incomprehensible, Ungraspable" (from "White Mythologies"), in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 271. For the original passage and the context of Derrida's argument, see *Marges de la Philosophie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972), p. 323: "La métaphore porte donc toujours sa mort en elle-même."

16. Derrida, "Différance," in *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 129, and see pp. 130-60 for further clarification of *différance*.

17. Joseph H. Summers, *The Muse's Method: An Introduction to "Paradise Lost"* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 47.

18. Henri Stegemeier, *The Dance of Death in Folksong, with an Introduction on the History of the Dance of Death* (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, 1939), pp. 22, 24.

19. See Rycharde Eden, *The Decades of the newe World* (London, 1555), p. 335.

20. On the term "moriens" used for black people, see *The Sheepherdes Calendar* (1518?); the term is glossed in a facsimile edition (London: Peter Davis, 1930), p. 174. And on "Moriens" in the *ars moriendi* tradition, see Caxton's 1490 printing of *The arte & crafte to know well to dye* (sig. A2v), which is glossed instructively by Phoebe S. Spinrad, *The Summons of Death on the Medieval and Renaissance English Stage* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1987), p. 31.

21. The *transi* motif, of man's passing from life to physical decay, involves the "twin image" of a person. The spectator is presented with two distinct, antithetic images which must somehow be reconciled. On these "double-decker" *transi* tombs, see Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini*, ed. H. W. Janson (New York:

Harry N. Abrams, 1964), pp. 63-66; Kathleen Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Michel Vovelle, *Mourir autrefois: Attitudes collectives devant la mort aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), and *La Mort et l'occident de 1300 à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983), p. 166; Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (1977; rpt., New York: Vintage Books, 1982), pp. 113-14; Duncan Harris, "Tombs, Guidebooks, and Shakespearean Drama: Death in the Renaissance," *Mosaic* 15/1 (Winter 1982), 13-28.

22. As will become clearer in what follows, my approach to this theme is indebted, initially, to Rosalie L. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), esp. pp. 169-89. My project differs from Colie's in that I focus on elementary aspects of semantic and rhetorical inversions as the building blocks of Milton's epic project; Colie was concerned primarily with Milton's relation to and his efforts to resolve (or sometimes to extend) the paradoxes inherent in Christian doctrine. See also her earlier investigation of this theme, "Time and Eternity," which examines the centrality of Christian paradoxes in Milton's arrangement of his great argument.

23. I am using the term "metaphor" in its Renaissance context, as "an instrument of everyday language" which is "but an inversion of sense by [the figure of] transport." Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, 3.7, p. 166.

24. Derrida, *Margins*, p. 230.

25. In *The Milton Encyclopedia*, ed. William B. Hunter, Jr. (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1978), 2:120.

26. Frye, *Milton's Imagery*, p. 115.

27. See Roland Mushat Frye, *God, Man, and Satan: Patterns of Christian Thought in "Paradise Lost," "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Great Theologians* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 7-13. For further clarification on this problem, which involves both aesthetics and theology, see Sister M. Hilda Bonham, "The Anthropomorphic God of *Paradise Lost*," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters* 58 (1968), 329-35; and C. A. Patrides, "Paradise Lost and the Theory of Accommodation," in *Bright Essence* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), pp. 159-63.

28. The facade at St. Innocent's in Paris provided a stable pattern and design for the printed books on the Dance of Death during the fifteenth century. See, for example, *The Paris Dance of Death* (1490), introduction by William M. Ivins, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1945), pp. iii-x; Francis Carco, *La Danse des Morts* (Geneva: Editions du Monde, 1944), p. 11; James M. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Glasgow: Jackson, Son, 1950), pp. 22-40.

29. See Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (1970; rpt., New York: Fontana/Collins, 1982), pp. 219-53, esp. p. 245.

30. Although I have paraphrased in English the main points pertaining to the problematic status of representation in the early modern period as discussed in the exemplary early modern Dance of Death, see the facsimile of the original 1538 edition of *Les simulachres & historiées faces de la mort*, ed. Werner L. Gundersheimer, *The Dance of Death by Hans Holbein the Younger* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1971), p. 5, sig. A3 (printer's contractions have been expanded): "Icy dira vng curieux questionnaire: Quelle figure de Mort peult estre par viuant representee? Ou, comment en peuuent deuiser ceulx, qui oncques ses inexorables forces n'experimenterent? Il est bien vray que l'inuisible ne se peult par chose visible proprement représenter. . . . Et pourtant qu'on n'a peu trouuer chose plus approchante a la similitude de Mort, que la personne morte, on a d'icelle effigie simulachres, & faces de Mort, pour en noz pensees imprimer la memoire de Mort plus au vif, que ne pourroient toutes les rhetoriques descriptions des orateurs."

31. A typical poetic expression of this theme is the often cited passage from Shakespeare's *Richard II*, 3.2.144–77.

32. See *The Dance of Death*, ed. Gundersheimer, p. xi.

33. John Sparrow, *Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 48. See also Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Longman, 1994), p. 14.

34. Cf. Jean François Lyotard's characterization of "mise en oeuvre," in his response to the question "What is the postmodern?" which is to be understood according to the paradox of the future anterior—and where the essay (from Montaigne on) essentially is "postmodern." Lyotard concludes his analysis by observing that the task at hand is not to supply reality but to invent allusions to the conceivable which cannot be presented. As I suggested earlier in this chapter (and following Rapaport's argument), there are more than a few aspects of Milton's project that urge us to view it alongside postmodern critical discursive strategies (see n. 10 to this chapter). My contention from the outset, that Milton's place in a trajectory of the Western philosophical tradition needs to be situated more thoroughly, takes on further resonance with respect to Jean François Lyotard, "Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism?" trans. Régis Durand, appended to *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 81: "a postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what 'will have been done.'"

35. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica*, pp. 32, 273–99.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

37. See Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*, rev. ed. (1958; rpt., New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), pp. 218–35.

38. George Strode, *Anatomy of Mortalitie*, 2nd ed. (London, 1632), p. 84 (G2v).

39. Derrida, *Margins*, p. 271.

40. Gayle L. Ormiston, "The Economy of Duplicity: Différance," in *Derrida and Difference*, ed. David Wood and Robert Bernasconi (Coventry: Parousia Press, 1985), p. 61.

41. Derrida, *Positions*, p. 40.

42. The ensuing analysis takes as its point of departure (and my English paraphrase refers to) Jean Baudrillard, *L'échange symbolique et la mort* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), pp. 11–13. Another way of translating this argument can be found in "Structural Law of Value and the Order of Simulacra," trans. Charles Levin, in John Fekete, ed., *The Structural Allegory: Reconstructive Encounters with the New French Thought* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 59.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Unless otherwise noted, quotations from Montaigne come from *The Essayes or Moral, Politicke, and Militarie Discourses of Lo: Michael de Montaigne*, trans. John Florio, 3 vols. (1603; rpt., London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1965), and appear in parentheses, identified by book, chapter, and page. I have elected to quote from Florio because, consistent with the theoretical trajectory of this study, my goal primarily is to recover and examine in their original context those commonplaces of Renaissance compositional practices that shed light on the aesthetic of anamnesis. Florio's tendency to embellish Montaigne's text—to use two, three, and sometimes four words where one might have sufficed—is precisely what makes his translation the

most fertile for recovering the range of meanings available to contemporary readers of the *Essais*. On this, see F. O. Matthiessen, *Translation: An Elizabethan Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), pp. 125–30, 143, 151. On Florio's usually faithful continuation of Montaigne's text, see Marcel Maistre Welch, "John Florio's Montaigne: From 'Fine French' to 'True English,'" *Style* 12, no. 3 (Summer 1978), 286–96; and, on Florio as the "best" translator of Montaigne, see Tom Conley, "Institutionalizing Translation: On Florio's Montaigne," *Glyph Textual Studies*, n.s. 1 (1986), 45–60, esp. 47–48, 56. Readers unfamiliar with Florio's exuberant rendering of Montaigne's text should take heed that chapter numbers differ slightly from Montaigne's in Book I (I.14 through I.40). On a possible explanation for the alteration in the numbering, see Daniel Martin, *L'architecture des "Essais" de Montaigne: Mémoire artificielle et mythologie* (Paris: Nizet, 1992), p. 44, n. 1.

2. See Hugo Friedrich, *Montaigne*, trans. Robert Rovini (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), pp. 42–47; Jean-Yves Pouilloux, *Lire les "Essais" de Montaigne* (Paris: François Maspero, 1969), pp. 20–25; Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 275–79; Antoine Compagnon, *La seconde main ou le travail de la citation* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), pp. 288–332; André Berthiaume, "Pratique de la citation dans les *Essais* de Montaigne," *Renaissance et Réforme*, n.s. 8, no. 2 (May 1984), 91–105, esp. 94, 97, 101.

3. See, for example, Lawrence D. Kritzman, *Destruction/Découverte: le fonctionnement de la rhétorique dans les "Essais" de Montaigne* (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1980); and John O'Neill, *Essaying Montaigne: A Study of the Renaissance Institution of Writing and Reading* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), esp. chap. 5, "Writing and Embodiment," pp. 82–99.

4. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 178.

5. For a clear account of the inscription's evolution and its role in Renaissance works of art, see Sparrow, *Visible Words*, pp. 5–100.

6. In this regard see, for example, Joachim du Bellay, *Les Antiquités de Rome* and *Les Regrets* 80, both published in 1558.

7. M. A. Screech, "Commonplaces of the Law, Proverbial Wisdom, and Philosophy: Their Importance in Renaissance Scholarship," in *Classical Influences on European Culture, 1500–1700*, ed. R. R. Bolgar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 131.

8. See Jean Starobinski, "La mélancolie de l'anatomiste," *Tel Quel* 10 (1962), 21–29.

9. Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. A. R. Shilleto, 3 vols. (1893; rpt., London: G. Bell and Sons, 1926), 1:18.

10. Cf. Martin Elsky, *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing, and Print in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 212. We do well to keep in mind that Montaigne himself was among the first readers of the published *Essais*. He became a reader of his book—and thus of his life—which, paradoxically, the industrial process of printed publication distanced from him. Instead of automatically endowing the book with the authority of closure, Elsky argues that the process of revisions makes print into a technology that could measure psychological change, even growth.

11. See, for example, Dorothy Gabe Coleman, *Montaigne's "Essais"* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987), pp. 132–37; Richard Regosin, *The Matter of My Book: Montaigne's "Essais" as the Book of the Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 193–97; and Steven Rendall, *Distinguo: Reading Montaigne Differently* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 110–12.

12. Here I build on the themes developed by Georges Poulet, *Studies in Human Time*, trans. Elliot Coleman (1956; rpt., New York: Harper, 1959), pp. 39–49; and Jean Starobinski, *Montaigne in Motion*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 173–84.

13. This is not to rule out the possibility that La Boétie's death, and the melancholy it

engendered, may have been a principal motivating factor in Montaigne's decision to compose the essays but to indicate that this sensible and often discussed line of inquiry, while probable, is neither at issue in my present argument nor relevant to my claims regarding the mechanics of anamnestic textual practices. See, for example, Michel Butor, *Essai sur les essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), esp. pp. 30-44; Donald Frame, "Consideration on the Genesis of Montaigne's *Essais*," in *Montaigne: Essays in Memory of Richard Sayce*, ed. I. D. McFarlane and Ian Maclean (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); Patrick Henry, *Montaigne in Dialogue: Censorship and Defensive Writing, Architecture and Friendship, the Self and the Other* (Saratoga: Anma Libri, 1987), pp. 73-100; Stein, *The House of Death*, pp. 255-58; Lawrence D. Kritzman, *The Rhetoric of Sexuality and Literature of the French Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 76.

14. Comparable to my contention is Ullrich Langer's analysis of a similar set of cultural circumstances and textual strategies undertaken in the face of death in *Invention, Death, and Self-Definitions in the Poetry of Pierre de Ronsard* (Saratoga: Anma Libri, 1986), esp. pp. 39-42, 89-101, 108-14.

15. Cf. *Essais*, I.1, p. 1, "je suis moy-mesmes la matière de mon livre"; and Florio's rendering, "Thus gentle Reader myself am the groundworke of my booke." This and future quotations from Montaigne's *Essais* follow the French edition established by Albert Thibaudet and Maurice Rat, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1962).

16. See Mary McKinley, *Words in a Corner: Studies in Montaigne's Latin Quotations* (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1981).

17. Here, and in what follows, my treatment of the notions of "man" and "character" are of a different order from the humanist theme of "the self" traditionally (and still frequently) evoked by some readers of Montaigne; see, for example, Donald Frame, "Self-Discovery and Liberation," in *Montaigne's Discovery of Man: The Humanization of a Humanist* (1955; rpt., New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 74-95. See also above, Chapter 1, n. 72.

18. See Lechner, *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplaces*; and, with special reference to Montaigne, see Edwin M. Duval, "Rhetorical Composition and the 'Open Form' in Montaigne's Early *Essais*," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 43, no. 2 (1981), 269-87; and Henry, *Montaigne in Dialogue*, p. 113.

19. John G. Rechtien, "John Foxe's *Comprehensive Collection of Commonplaces*: A Renaissance Memory System for Students and Theologians," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 9, no. 1 (1978), 84. See Preliminary Remarks, n. 9.

20. For a catalogue of the *sententiae* decorating Montaigne's library and brief comments on where they appear in the *Essais*, see Grace Norton, *Studies in Montaigne* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), pp. 165-88; and Jacques de Feytaud, "Une visite à Montaigne," in *Le Chateau de Montaigne* (Société des Amis de Montaigne, 1971), pp. 36-43, 53-62.

21. Hugo Friedrich, *Montaigne*, trans. Dawn Eng (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 12; cf. Friedrich, *Montaigne*, trans. Rovini, p. 22.

22. See above, Chapter 1, pp. 13-23.

23. Consistent with my broader claim, this site of writing has been characterized as a "Melancholy retreat" by Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy*, pp. 64 ff.

24. See above, Chapter 1, n. 15.

25. See above, Chapter 1, n. 19.

26. For example, the lacunar ceiling of the "Haute Galerie" of Dampierre-sur-Boutonne, with its sixty-one emblems, is a typical manifestation of such an ornamental interior design; see Maria Antoinette de Angelis, "Emblems and Devices on a Ceiling in the Chateau of Dampierre-sur-Boutonne," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983), 222 (illustrations on pp. 32-35).

27. As was discussed in Chapter 1, John Willis, drawing on classical antecedents,

detailed what sorts of words and images could be used to adorn a memory theater, thus implying a strong affinity among pithy mottoes, conventional emblematic images, and the art of memory; see *The Art of Memory* (London: W. Iones, 1621), sigs. B10-B12, pp. 34-38.

28. On the architectural theme, see Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title Page in England, 1550-1660* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 6-9.

29. Although the phrase is printed "Plaace of Invention" (which makes sense in the context of "place" and "image" in an artificial memory system), it is also possible Florio intended the word "Palace" to imply a mnemonic edifice. The third edition was the first to print this frontispiece and accompanying poem. Also, this edition contains the claim that it seeks to correct the numerous errors of the first two; and yet, ever wary of the bustle of the printing house, Florio cautions: "If the faults found even by myselfe in the first impression, be now by the Printer corrected, as he was directed, the workè is much amended; If not, know that through mine attendance on her Majesty, I could not intend it; and blame not Neptune for thy second shipwracke" (sig. A3).

30. The connection between the *ars rhetorica* and the *ars memorativa* has been elaborated more thoroughly by Daniel Martin, "Pour une lecture mnémonique des *Essais*: une image et un lieu," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne*, 5th ser., nos. 31-32 (1979), 51-58, and in "L'idée du Théâtre de Camillo et les *Essais* de Montaigne," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne*, 6th ser., nos. 7-8 (1981), 79-96; and see especially the culminating achievement of this suggestive line of inquiry in Martin, *L'architecture des "Essais" de Montaigne*.

31. See Yates, *Art of Memory*, chaps. 1 and 6. On Montaigne's conception of *memoria*, with respect to conventional rhetoric and his effort to "reinvent" Memory from within the text, see Michel Beaujour, *Miroirs d'encre: rhétorique de l'auto-portrait* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), pp. 113-26; on "le mémoire intertextuelle," see Kritzman, *Destruction/Découverte*, pp. 102-5.

32. See Barbara Bowen, *The Age of Bluff* (Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1972).

33. For a lucid development of this point, as it relates both to Montaigne's literary self-portrait and to the Renaissance method of composition derived from the rhetorical tradition of using topics within an artificial memory system, see Daniel Menager, "Mémoire et écriture chez Montaigne," *Oeuvres et Critiques* 8, nos. 1-2 (1983), 169-84, esp. 169-71.

34. Cf. *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Thibaudet and Rat, p. 1071, and Frame, "Essays" of Montaigne, p. 837: Florio translates as "frame" Montaigne's verb "forger," which Frame renders as "make."

35. Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Basic Writings*, ed. David F. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 323-39.

36. Desiderius Erasmus, *De Utramque Verborum ac Rerum Copia*, ed. Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1963), p. 66.

37. Cf. Richard Regosin, "Le miroüer vague: Reflections of the Example in Montaigne's *Essais*," *Oeuvres et Critiques* 8, nos. 1-2 (1983), 78; and Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 78-80.

38. Martin, "Pour une lecture mnémonique des *Essais*," p. 55. See also Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, pp. 65-68.

39. See Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 43.

40. Francis Meres, *Wits Commonwealth* (London, 1634), sigs. A2-A3v; the text cited is substantially the same as the 1598 edition.

41. See Harry Levin, "Bacon's Poetics," in *Renaissance Rereadings: Intertext and Context*, ed. Maryanne Cline Horowitz, Anne J. Cruz, and Wendy A. Furman (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 6: "Bacon took little interest in the material basis of the

mental processes that he delineated. . . . Bacon was content to draw his conceptual triad from the ancient apparatus of faculty psychology: Memory, Imagination, and Reason."

42. *The Works of Francis Bacon*, collected and ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1863), 6:182. Future citations follow this edition and are identified by volume and page number.

43. On "history" in medieval epistemology, as pertains to memory's role in ethical decision making and re-creating the past for the present, see Janet Coleman, "Late Scholastic Memoria et Reminiscentia: Its Uses and Abuses," in *Intellectuals and Writers in Fourteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Piero Boitani and Anna Torti (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1986), pp. 22-44.

44. Cicero, *De inventione* (1.7), trans. M. H. Hubbell (1949; rpt., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 18-21, divides rhetoric into *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *pronuntiatio*.

45. I cite from three versions because, as indicated from the outset, my concern is primarily with the broader semantic implications of such exemplary passages. The first citation comes from *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Thibaudet and Rat, p. 1088; the second, from *Essays*, ed. Florio, III.13, p. 376; and the last, from Frame, "Essays" of Montaigne, pp. 851-52.

46. See Conley, *Graphic Unconscious*, esp. pp. 132, 143.

47. Randle Cotgrave, *English and French Dictionarie* (1611), sig. 4H6v: "Thesorise" is translated "hoarded as treasure"; and "Thezorisier," "to hoard, or gather threasure; to threasure up."

48. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, esp. pp. 142-57, 207-20; Starobinski, "La mélancholie de l'anatomiste," pp. 21-29. Also of use in this regard is Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy*; and, of course, Klubansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*.

49. Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 63-117.

50. Cf. *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Thibaudet and Rat, pp. 1069-70; and Frame, "Essays" of Montaigne, pp. 836-37.

51. See Antoine Compagnon, *Nous Michel de Montaigne* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), pp. 170-93, the section titled "Tel père, tel fils: une ontologie de la semence."

52. Cf. Butor, *Essai sur les essais*, p. 64.

53. On sixteenth-century epigraphy as it pertains to the celebrated Bordeaux copy, upon which modern editions of the *Essays* are based, see Steven Rendall, "Montaigne under the Sign of Fama," *Yale French Studies* 66 (1984), 139-42.

54. Georges Bataille, *The Tears of Eros*, trans. Peter Conner (San Francisco: City Lights, 1989), pp. 65-66.

55. This euphemism for the virile member comes from the Old English *gyrd*, meaning a stick, twig, or shoot; it also was used to designate a standard unit of English long measure (man is the measure of all things, indeed). But another origin and meaning are concealed in the word "yard" as well, and if we listen to what language has to tell us we can begin to hear what would have been carried along within the casing of the term in Florio's day: Deriving from the Old English *geard*, the multiple implication is that of fence, dwelling, house—and it is the second element of the Old English *ortgeard*, meaning orchard. A yard, then, is that which is surrounded on all sides; it is an open space, enclosed for cultivation or productive activities; it signals a union of dwelling and earth.

56. On the theoretical implications of this analogous way of treating the relation of writing to the generative act, as a kind of sexual substitute or sublimation, see Kritzman, *The Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 74-76, 133-34.

57. See Donald Frame, *Montaigne: A Biography* (1965; rpt., San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), pp. 174-75.

58. Derrida, *Dissemination*, p. xxv.

59. Ibid., p. 99.
60. Ibid., p. 103.
61. See Charles W. Lemmi, "The Classical Deities in Bacon" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1933), 206.
62. The doctrine of the transmigration of souls is essential to Plato's "proof" of anamnesis. See, for example, *Phaedo* (72e), and *Meno* (81d), in which Socrates argues that learning is the recollection of what has been known in a former life. This knowledge was enriched when the body died and the soul returned to the source. Once that soul is placed in a new body (and after having crossed, and drunk a measure of water from, the River Lethe), it loses access to its previous store of knowledge (*Republic*, 621b). On the development of the maxim "Knowledge is remembrance" into a coherent theory of knowledge, see *Theaetetus* (190e–195b), in which Plato offers a model for distinguishing a memory image from a fresh impression of sense.
63. Montaigne is engaged more in a "polylogue" (with those who have ceased to be—including prior versions of himself) than he is in a simple dialogue with an author, or with himself, or even with a cluster of borrowings. Montaigne often leaves his source material unidentified, and, in this respect, his approach to the problem of representing the progress of his humors bears comparison to Jacques Derrida, "Restitutions of the truth in pointing [pointure]," in *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 255–382.
64. See Chapter 2, n. 23, on the Renaissance understanding of metaphor as "an inversion of sense" by virtue of the "figure of transport"; and Derrida's statement cited in Chapter 2, p. 71: "Metaphor always carries its own death within itself."
65. Macrobius, *Commentariorum in Somnium Scipionis*, XII.7–15. For the Latin text I have used the Biblioteca di Cultura series, edited by Luigi Scarpa (Padua: Liviana Editrice, 1981). For supplements to my own translation I have referred to the translation by William Harris Stahl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 134.
66. See Plotinus, *Enneades*, ed. R. Volkmann, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1883–84), 4.8.8.
67. Cotgrave, *Dictionarie*, sig. I3v.
68. Rendall, "Montaigne under the Sign of *Fama*," p. 149.
69. "Es raisons et inventions que je transplante en mon solage et confons aux miennes, j'ay à escient ommis parfois d'en marquer l'auteur, pour tenir en bride la temerité de ces sentences hastives qui se jettent sur toute sorte d'escrits, notamment jeunes escrits d'hommes encore vivants. . . . Car moy, qui, à faute de mémoire, demeure court tous les coups à les trier, par cognoissance de nation, sçay très bien sentir, à mesurer ma portée, que mon terroir n'est aucunement capable d'aucunes des fleurs trop riches que j'y trouve semées, et que tous les fruits de mon creu ne les sçauroient payer" (II.10, p. 78).
70. Cf. Conley, *Graphic Unconscious*, pp. 126–28.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. J. B. Harley and David Woodward, eds., *The History of Cartography* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 1:xviii.
2. John Moore, *A Mappe of Mans Mortalitie* (1617), 1.9.2, sig. E7, p. 61.
3. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 179.
4. Ibid., p. 166.
5. On the mapping of terrain as ideological reflection, see Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie with Maps* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 87–112.
6. This has been the standard English implication of the term since Samuel Daniel's translation of *The Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius* (London, 1585), sig. A2v: "declaring their

inward pretended purposes and enterprises . . . shadowed under a certyne vayle of formes or figures." See Praz, *Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, pp. 58-60; and Daly, *Literature in the Light of the Emblem*, pp. 21-25.

7. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

9. Although I take his argument to places where he did not, my contention that the origin of the theoretical condition analyzed by Baudrillard is consistent with his earlier (and, to be sure, parabolic) rendering of a genealogy of the historical processes (under the heading of "The Three Orders of Simulation") that culminates in the precession of simulacra. In *L'échange symbolique et la mort*, pp. 77-81, he maintains that the first of these orders, the counterfeit—and its problematic way of showing itself—was born with the Renaissance, with the destruction of the feudal order which gave way to the emergence of open competition at the level of distinctive signs.

10. Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, trans. Willard R. Trask (1963; rpt., New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 121.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

12. See Chapter 2, p. 67.

13. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 105-6.

14. See the commentary provided with this map in *The Art of Cartography: Book of Postcards from the Huntington Library* (Petaluma, Calif.: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1991).

15. See Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica*.

16. Moore, *Mappe of Mans Mortalitie*, 1.6.3, sig. D2, p. 35.

17. Jodocus Hondius, "Typus Totus Orbis Terrarum, in quo & Christiani militis certam super terram (in pietas studiosi gratiam) graphice designatur" (Amsterdam, 1596?). The allegorical figures flanking the Christian knight are Sins of the World and the Flesh, the Devil, and Death. The map is as up-to-date as geographical knowledge of the time allowed. See Eph. 6:18, which serves a motto to the map and the allegorical tableau together; and the biblical verses concerning the figure of Mors, Apoc. 2:11, John 3:24, and 1 Cor. 15:54.

18. The iconography of the winds—whether four, nine, ten, or twelve—has a long and varied tradition dating back at least as far as Aristotle's *Meteorologica* 2.6.363a.21, and the system proposed by Timosthenes of Rhodes (fl. 270 B.C.) linking the twelve winds, regions, and peoples. See Harley and Woodward, eds., "The Growth of an Empirical Cartography in Hellenistic Greece," *History of Cartography*, 1:153; and Lyall Watson, *Heaven's Breath: A Natural History of the Wind* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1984).

19. See the commentary by Nigel J. Morgan in Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski, eds., *The Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England*, Exhibition Catalogue (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1987), p. 215. An important source of reference remains Konrad Miller, *Mappamundi: Die ältesten Weltkarten*, 6 vols. (Stuttgart: J. Roth, 1895-98), vol. 5.

20. See Harley and Woodward, eds. *History of Cartography*, 1:286, 288; and P.D.A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 32.

21. A. L. Humphreys, *Antique Maps and Charts* (New York: Dorset Press, 1989), p. 20.

22. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p. 19. Cf. Duncan Harris, "Tombs, Guidebooks, and Shakespearean Drama," which argues that Foucault "oversimplifies the process of cultural change and reduces to homogeneity the 'multiple unity' which is a dominant feature of Renaissance thought" (p. 13). Harris provides a useful corrective to, and helps substantiate further, Foucault's assertion that an anxiety associated with recognizing "the nothingness of existence" is common to both "the dance of death" and the "ship of fools."

23. For a good, brief analysis of Barclay's free adaptation of Brant's *Narrenschiff* based on

the Latin and French editions, see Edwin H. Zeydel's introduction to his translation of Brant's *Ship of Fools* (1944; rpt., Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1962), pp. 24–30.

24. I would note in passing that the number 7 is accorded much significance in Christian hexameral thought, especially where structuring devices and themes coincide. See, for example, Mary Irma Corcoran, *Milton's "Paradise Lost" with Reference to the Hexameral Background* (1945; rpt., Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1967); C. A. Patrides, "The Numerological Approach to Cosmic Order during the English Renaissance," *Isis* 49 (1958), 391–97; Crump, *Mystical Design of "Paradise Lost."*

25. The prayers constituting the main text of the *Booke* differ slightly from edition to edition, but the order of the seven illustrated sequences is preserved. The basis for the border motifs first appeared in 1569 (in *Christian Prayers and Meditations*) and remained intact in the 1578 revised and expanded edition (*Booke of Christian Prayers*); however, none of the prayers in foreign languages of the original prayer book is retained in later versions.

26. For the sake of clarity, and because this work has yet to receive authoritative bibliographic attention, I would note in passing some basic information about the various states of the text. John Daye's *Christian Prayers and Meditations* (1569) repeats the life-of-Christ series seven times (two distinct sets of plates are employed within the series). Unlike the four editions of the *Booke of Christian Prayers* (1578, 1581, 1590, and 1608), *Prayers and Meditations* does not contain the illustrated sequence of Christian Virtues and Senses; instead, it moves from the biblical narrative sequence into the Dance of Death and, after repeating the Dance of Death (of men exclusively) and part of one of women, it concludes with illustrations of Christ in triumph and glory.

The 1578 *Booke* adds to the border program of 1569; it retains the life-of-Christ series but runs it three times. Following the life of Christ, it presents personifications of twenty-two Christian virtues, scenes of charitable acts in daily life corresponding to the six acts of corporal mercy from Matthew 25, the five senses, and four verses prefiguring the Apocalypse. These four sets of images are then repeated exactly as they appeared initially, and then lead into a Dance of Death (which runs three times in succession), first of men and then of women. The 1569 image of Christ in triumph is preceded by a page of Death in triumph. The 1581 *Booke* appears to be a reissue of 1578; it follows the illustrations exactly with only minor variations in border grotesques. The 1590 *Booke* follows the previous two until the Christian Virtues sequence. Something must have happened to the plates "Knowledge of God" and "Loue of God," because they do not appear in this edition (or in subsequent editions). For these first two Virtues, it substitutes "Temperance" and "Chastitie," and these plates recur in the cycle at those places where they had sequentially appeared in previous editions. Further, something has also happened to the plates "Patience" and "Humilitie," because they do not show up in this series; instead, this edition runs "Measure" and "Industry." These two images are repeated in the series at those places where they had appeared in the earlier editions. When the entire series of Virtues is run for the second time, instead of using "Temperance" and "Chastitie" for the plates "Knowledge" and "Loue," this edition uses "Touching" and "Taste." It proceeds as the earlier version had, with "Fayth" and "Hope," then, as it did in the first run of the sequence, substitutes "Measure" and "Temperance" for "Patience" and "Humilitie." Although several of the Virtues now have "ie" endings, the rest of the border illustrations proceed exactly the same as in previous editions.

The Jacobean reissue (1608) follows exactly the 1590 sequences except for the superaddition of geometrical ornaments along the top and bottom of each page. This version is distinctive for the comparative carelessness in its printing, with its many turned letters and inverted illustrations.

27. For a good, brief description of the page disposition, see *The Bible of the Poor: A Facsimile and Edition of the British Library Blockbook C.9.d.2.*, trans. and with commentary by

Albert C. Labriola and John W. Smeltz (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1990), pp. 3–10.

28. Ibid., p. viii.

29. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 41, 83, 126.

30. See Volkmann, *Ars Memorativa*, pp. 132–33. Other texts similar to the one Volkmann attributes to Jan de Heins are extant as well; see, for example, that by Anshelm discussed in Chapter 1, p. 55.

31. For example, Fulwood, *Castel of Memorie* (1562), sig. G6. See also above, Preliminary Remarks, n. 9.

32. On the role of this kind of repetition, both to exercise one's "natural memory" and in the construction of an "artificial memory," see Fulwood, *Castel of Memorie* (1562), sigs. G1v–G2v, G5v.

33. Cf. Greenwood, *Shifting Perspective and the Stylish Style*, p. 193; Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 17–25; Gilman, *The Curious Perspective*, pp. 98–104; Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphic Art*, trans. W. J. Strachan (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977), pp. 104–5; and Mary F. S. Hervey, *Holbein's "Ambassadors"* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1900), pp. 203–33.

34. Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphic Art*, pp. 91–114.

35. See *ibid.*, pp. 104–5: "Let us imagine a room with an entrance in the middle of one side, and two side-entrances opposite, with the picture placed between the two side-doors, in the axis. *The Mystery of the Two Ambassadors* is in Two Acts. *Act One* is played when the spectator enters by the main door and finds himself a certain distance away from the two nobles, who appear at the back as upon a stage. He is amazed by the stance, the display of luxury, the intense realism of the picture. He notes a single disturbing factor: the strange object at the ambassadors' feet. Our visitor advances to have a closer look. The scene becomes even more realistic as he approaches, but the strange object becomes increasingly enigmatic. Disconcerted, he withdraws by the right-hand door, the only one open, and this is *Act Two*. As he enters the next room, he turns his head to throw a final glance at the picture, and everything becomes clear: the visual contraction causes the rest of the scene to disappear completely and the hidden figure to be revealed. Instead of human splendor, he sees a skull. The personages and all their scientific paraphernalia vanish, and in their place rises the symbol of the End. The play is over."

36. On the place of *vanitas* emblems, and the skull in particular, in the culture of the northern Renaissance, see Wolfgang Eckart, "Die Darstellung des Skeletts als Todessymbol in der Sinnbildkunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Studien zur Thematik des Todes im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Paul Richard Blum (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1983); Gisele Mathieu-Castellani, *Emblemes de la mort: la dialogue de l'image et du texte* (Paris: Nizet, 1988); Nigel Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual, c. 1500–c. 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991).

37. Marrow, "In desen speigell," pp. 154–63.

38. See Ariès, *Images de l'homme devant la mort*, p. 190.

39. Veca, "Vanitas," pp. 41, 175–76.

40. Jean Baudrillard, "The Trompe l'Oeil," in *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, ed. Norman Bryson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 56–58.

41. I am building here on Heidegger's notion of "everydayness" as explored in *Being and Time*, II.1.

42. See above, Fig. 1.7.

43. See Bainard Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," *New German Critique* 22 (Winter 1981), 112, 109.

44. On the conditions surrounding the commissioning of this painting, probably by the

wife of the recently deceased Braque, the coats-of-arms appearing on the portrait backs, and the date of its probable execution, see Paul Lemprieur, "Un Triptych de Roger de la Pasture au Musée du Louvre," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 10 (1913), 257-80, esp. 273 ff.; Fierens-Gaert, *Histoire de la Peinture Flamande des origines à la fin du XVe siècle: Les Continuateurs des Van Eyck* (Paris and Brussels: Editions G. Van Oest, 1928), pp. 57-59; Max J. Friedlander, *Rogier van der Weyden and the Master of Flemalle*, trans. Heinz Norden (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1967), pp. 65-66; and Shirley Neilsen Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs: A Study in Patronage* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 29.

45. Shirley Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, p. 30. For the French transcription and editorial emendations, see Lemprieur, "Un Triptych de Roger de la Pasture," p. 262, n. 2.

46. Shirley Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, p. 30.

47. The quotation is from Ecclesiasticus 41. Again, on the orthography and transcription, see Lemprieur, "Un Triptych de Roger de la Pasture," pp. 262-63, n. 3.

48. Elizabeth Cook, *Seeing through Words: The Scope of Late Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 21-47; although not discussing the "pattern poem" in the light of the *ars memoriae*, she draws some conclusions relevant to my inquiry: "Though figured poems initially present images to the corporeal eye which gives us an immediate sense of reference and meaning, these poems imply an acute consciousness of what is involved in reading or hearing the words which make them up" (p. 47). See also Martin Elsky, "George Herbert's Pattern Poems and the Materiality of Language: A New Approach to Renaissance Hieroglyphics," *English Literary History* 50 (Summer 1983), 245-60.

49. Cf. Shirley Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, p. 34, who sees John the Baptist as the "natural man" before Christ. For a detailed reading of the iconography of the three front panels in conjunction with the mottoes given to each of the five figures depicted, see Lemprieur, "Un Triptych de Roger de la Pasture," pp. 264-69.

50. On the composition of this triptych as exemplifying Rogier van der Weyden's so-called austere period, see C. Perier-d'Ieteren, "Rogier van der Weyden, His Artistic Personality, and His Influence on Painting in the XVth Century," in *Rogier van der Weyden: Official Painter to the City of Brussels, Portrait Painter of the Burgundian Court* (Brussels: Maison du Roi, 1979), p. 45.

51. *The Complete Poems of John Skelton, Laureate*, ed. Philip Henderson (1931; rpt., London, J. M. Dent and Sons, 1959), p. 19.

52. John Harthan, *The Books of Hours* (1977; rpt., New York: Park Lane Books, 1982), p. 92.

53. I am indebted to Walter Harrelson, and the other members of Otto's Group, for providing suggestions on the various ways this biblical passage in connection with the image of Death could have been read according to the theological currents of the day.

54. It is worth noting that a similar use of mirror writing, which is not to be attributed to negligence on the engraver's part, appears on the flag of Brant's Ship of Fools. This was an integral part of the overall design of the work of art, and the mirror writing was geared to implicate the viewer and to draw him into the setting which had been thus framed.

55. My argument in what follows is indebted to the critical treatment of Descartes's formulation of the certainty of his being by Dalia Judovitz, *Subjectivity and Representation in Descartes: The Origins of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

56. Strobe, *Anatomy of Mortalitie*, sig. E3r.

57. *The Kalender of Shepeherdes*, printed by Wynken de Worde and revised by Robert Copland (1518?), sig. M7v.

58. All citations from *Don Quixote* follow the translation by Tobias Smollett (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1986).

59. For a survey of the sources associated with this dialogue, and the assertion that this

passage is a profound transitional moment, “something bordering on another text—an intertext—in the form of a simple structure so that the simple structure [*einfache Form*] is placed in relationship to a more complex structure,” see Karl-Ludwig Selig, “*Don Quixote* and the Game of Chess,” in *The Verbal and the Visual: Essays in Honor of William Sebastian Heckscher*, ed. Karl-Ludwig Selig and Elizabeth Sears (New York: Italica Press, 1990), 203–11.

INTERLUDE

1. Charles Sorel, *The Extravagant Shepherd*, trans. J.D. (London: T. Newcomb, 1654), Book III, p. 68, sig. K2v. The original French passage—like the full title—makes clear the circular sense of self-consciously poetic and tropological playfulness: *Le Berger Extravagant ou parmy des fantasies amoureuves on void les impertinences des Romans & de Poësie* (Paris: Tovssaint du Bray, 1627), pp. 392–94, sigs. 2B4v–2B5v.

2. The first part of the quotation comes from Francis Quarles, *Hieroglyphikes* (1638), p. 1, and the second from Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna* (1612), p. 8.

3. See, for example, Sidney, *Apology for Poetry*, pp. 103, 116, 163–64, 185.

4. *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Keynes, 2:545.

5. *Ibid.*, 1:45.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, p. 125.

2. See above, the third section of Chapter 3, esp. n. 62; and Cornford's commentary in his translation of the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*, in *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*.

3. Unless otherwise noted, all citations from Browne come from *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Keynes, and will be identified by an abbreviation of the essay's title, and then, where applicable, by part, section, and page numbers. Keynes's volume numbers will not be cited in my text, so please note that *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* is in vol. 2, and all other essays quoted in this chapter are in vol. 1.

4. On the conventional Protestant view of the twofold knowledge of God, see John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 1:40.

5. Frank L. Huntley, *Sir Thomas Browne: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 129.

6. On this aspect of serious gaming (*serio ludere*) and on “invented” experiments in the application of metaphor in the Christian mystical tradition, see Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, p. 222.

7. *Sir Thomas Browne: The Major Works*, ed. C. A. Patrides (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), p. 45.

8. Cf. Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 253; and *Browne: Works*, ed. Patrides, p. 29.

9. See E. H. Gombrich, “*Icones Symbolicae*,” in *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, II, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1978), pp. 160–61, on this characterization of the metaphysical conceit (used in reference to Dante's poetic method and experience “on the highest level”).

10. This observation, and my subsequent application of it to Browne and early modern aesthetics, is doubly grounded in the exposition on Renaissance Neoplatonism by Wind,

"The Concealed God," in *Pagan Mysteries*, pp. 218–35; and the metaphysical critique of aesthetic theory by Martin Heidegger, *The Origin of the Work of Art*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), sec. 2, p. 49.

11. See, for example, John Smith, *The Mysterie of Rhetorique Unvail'd* (1657), facsimile reprint (Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1973), sig. E5, p. 65, which defines *Allegoria* as follows: "inversion or changing; It is an inversion when one thing is propounded in the words, and another in the sense: the word is derived from [allegoreo] to signifie a thing allegorically under other words."

12. Cook, *Seeing through Words*, pp. 18–20; and Conley, *Graphic Unconscious*, pp. 12–15.

13. *The Worthby Tract of Paulus Iovius*, trans. Daniel, sig. B4v. The prime importance of this analogy is emphasized by Giovio, who mentions it in the first of his five conditions for the perfect *impresa*; see Paolo Giovio, *Dialogo dell'impresa militari et amorose* (Lyons, 1559), sig. b. See also Chapter 4, n. 6, herein.

14. William Camden, *Remains Concerning Britain* (1624), ed. R. D. Dunn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 177.

15. For a good, brief survey of the emblematic conceit in the seventeenth century, see K. K. Ruthven, *The Conceit* (London: Methuen, 1969), pp. 33–41.

16. On "the world as text" metaphor, see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard Trask (1948; rpt., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 319–26; and, on its implications for the emblem tradition, see Freeman, *English Emblem Books*, pp. 40–42. On the place of this metaphor in the history of the treatises on *impresa*, see Marie-F. Tristan, "L'art des devises au XVI^e siècle en Italie," in *Emblemes et devises au temps de la Renaissance*, ed. M. T. Jones-Davies (Paris: Jean Touzot, 1981), pp. 48–49.

17. Of special relevance to my claim is Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, "Metaphysical Poetry and the Poetic of Correspondence," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14 (April 1953), 221–34, esp. 228–29. See also the analysis of Christofori Girarda's *Bibliothecae Alexandrinae Icones Symbolicae* (1626) by Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae," in *Symbolic Images*, pp. 145–60.

18. Ernest B. Gilman, "Word and Image in Quarles' *Emblemes*," *Critical Inquiry*, Spring 1980, 408.

19. Throughout this section I will use the term "man" rather than gender-nonspecific terminology because, according to the motif of "God's image" popular during the seventeenth century, and consistent with the way Genesis was translated, man was made in God's image and woman was created from man's bone. To use a form of logic sympathetic to Browne's exposition, woman, therefore, is a second-level abstraction of the image of God abstracted from the body of man—metaphorically speaking, she is a shadow of the simulacrum of God's image.

20. See Robert Klein, "Théorie de l'expression figurée dans les traités italiens sur les *impresa*, 1555–1612," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 19 (1957), 320–41, and "The Figurative Thought of the Renaissance," *Diogenes* 32 (Winter 1960), 107–23.

21. Quarles, "On God's Image," in *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations, and Observations* (London, 1641), III, 70, pp. 146–47. All quotations from this poem follow the Huntington Library's copy of the fifth edition of this popular book of epigrams (HEH 147351). The first edition appeared in London in 1632.

22. Cf. Luke 9 regarding the transfiguration of God-as-man into God-the-Spirit; and John 1, which declares: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

23. Because none of Apelles's work is extant, the evidence for esteeming him a paragon of artists is derived from written descriptions of his works, most notably Pliny, *Natural History* 35.36.79–97.

24. By comparison, I would note here the subtle variation in but substantially similar use

of this ironic conceit in Montaigne's report of a cannibal victim taunting his captors who plan to eat his flesh (a passage that now takes on special resonances given the argument in Chapter 3 about Montaigne's relation to his cultural and biological forefathers): "this flesh, and these veines, are your owne; fond men as you are, know you not that the substance of your forefathers limbes is yet tied into ours? Taste them well, for in them shall you finde the relish of your owne flesh" (I.30, p. 227).

25. See Heidegger's clarification of "Dasein" in *Being and Time*, para. 65.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 376.

27. See W. P. Dunn, *Sir Thomas Browne* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1950), p. 176; Huntley, "Browne: Relationship," pp. 204–19, and *Browne*, pp. 204–17; Norman MacKenzie, "Sir Thomas Browne as a Man of Learning: A Discussion of *Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus*," *English Studies in Africa* 10 (1967), 69; Margaret Ash Heideman, "Hydriotaphia and *The Garden of Cyrus*: A Paradox and a Cosmic Vision," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 19 (1950), 23–66.

28. Cf. Janet E. Halley, "Sir Thomas Browne's *The Garden of Cyrus* and the Real Character," *English Literary Renaissance* 15 (Winter 1985), 100–21.

29. See Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque*, pp. 149–204. Although concerned primarily with Spanish intellectual life and culture (and making only one passing reference to Browne), Maravall's analysis proves compatible with my own in what follows (especially the last section), namely, that Browne's literary endeavor can be construed as an exemplary manifestation of mid-seventeenth-century expressions of conventions by and through which "the image of the world and human being" were given to be known.

30. *Urn and Garden* appear together in a single volume in all four editions printed during Browne's lifetime (see Huntley, "Browne: Relationship," p. 439, n. 8). Although it is not evident from Keynes's text, in the first edition (1658), a small octavo volume, as in the second printing of the two essays added to the first quarto edition of *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1658), the dedicatory letter for *Garden*, to Sir Nicholas Bacon, follows that for *Urn*, to Thomas Le Gros, in the opening pages of the volume (sigs. A2–A6 and 5¶3–5*v, respectively). As if designed to minimize any breach in the continuity between the two essays, the emblem opening *Garden of Cyrus* appears immediately after the sententia from Lucan that concludes *Urn Burial*.

31. Patrides, in *Browne: Works*, p. 321, n. 14, sees this as Browne's only explicit hint of the close textual relationship between *Hydriotaphia* and *Garden of Cyrus*.

32. 1 Cor. 15:35–49, quoted from a facsimile of the King James Bible (1611), sig. R2v, ed. A. W. Pollard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911).

33. See above, Chapter Three, pp. 110–13.

34. As before, the term "sign" in this context is being used in its strict semiotic sense; see Chapter 3, n. 38.

35. Yates, *Art of Memory*, pp. 42–45.

36. Jean-Jacques Denonain, "Optique et expression baroques chez Sir Thomas Browne," in *Renaissance Maniérisme, Baroque, Actes du XIe Stage International de Tours* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1972), pp. 101–13. See especially Denonain's contention that, in *Hydriotaphia* and *The Garden of Cyrus*, ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny of the baroque (p. 113).

37. See Heidegger, *Origin of the Work of Art*, p. 49.

38. Huntley, "Browne: Relationship," p. 425, points out that both were written at the same time, May 1, 1658—in the *fifth* month. Further, each has a prominent midpoint, thus making each essay follow a chiasmic structure. This element has been commented on with respect to the thirty-first paragraph of the third, the middle, chapter of *Garden* (which has sixty-one paragraphs in all) as Browne's way of emphasizing his use of "both number and

figure." See Thomas C. Singer, "Sir Thomas Browne's 'Emphaticall decussation, or fundamentall figure': Geometrical Hieroglyphics and *The Garden of Cyrus*," *English Literary Renaissance* 17, no. 1 (Winter 1987), 94.

39. On double descriptions, like "allurements and baits of superstition," and on the pairing of Latin (or sometimes Greek) words and Anglo-Saxon ones ("aenigmas and riddles"), see Austin Warren, "The Style of Sir Thomas Browne," *Kenyon Review* 13 (1951), 658–86. Browne's rhetoric of doubling involved not only pairs of words but pairs of clauses "and even a series of such pairs which manifest the reflecting mind that cannot express an idea without adding a qualification which precisifies its meaning"; see Scholastica Mandeville, "The Rhetorical Tradition of the *Sententia*" (Ph.D. diss., St. Louis University, 1960), p. 197.

40. I am using the term "truth" in a phenomenological sense, as discussed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Algorithm and the Mystery of Language," in *The Prose of the World*, trans. John O'Neill, ed. Claude Lefort (1973; rpt., Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1981), p. 129: "[In the case of transcendence] as in language, truth is not an adequation but anticipation, repetition, and slippage of meaning. Truth allows itself to be reached only through a sort of distance. The thing sought is not the thing perceived. Knowledge is not perception, speech is not one gesture among all other gestures. For speech is the vehicle of our movement toward truth, as the body is the vehicle of our being in the world."

41. Cf. Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, pp. 8, 275.

42. See above, Chapter 1, pp. 21–31. Halley, "Garden and the Real Character," pp. 116–21, associates the geometrical diagram of the quincunx with the visual images used by those who advocated universal language in the Renaissance. Her argument comes very near to my thesis regarding the affinity between melancholy emblems of *memento mori* and the arts of memory in that she views an emblematic shorthand, like that used by Browne, as being allied to memory systems and Egyptian hieroglyphics.

43. See above, Chapter 1, pp. 17–23.

44. Huntley, *Browne*, p. 269, n. 10 (and "Browne: Relationship," p. 439, n. 9), identifies this quotation in Proertius 4.11.14 as a fragment of the imagined funeral oration for Cornelia, who enters the gates of glory and bids her husband not to weep: "what death takes it holds fast; I am now a handful of ashes" (and then the portion borrowed by Browne); "a small burden that can be lifted with the five fingers of one hand."

45. H. E. Butler translates this section from Quintilian's *Inst. Or.* 8.3.9 (p. 215): "What fairer sight is there than rows of trees planted in échelon which present straight lines to the eye from whatever angle they be viewed?" Patrides, in *Browne: Works*, p. 320, n. 9, observes that this borrowing from Quintilian was, along with the diagram, lifted from Curtius and della Porta. Browne acknowledges his source in a margin note.

46. Cf. Halley, "Garden and the Real Character," p. 100, who reads this *sententia* as Browne's declaration of intent, thus challenging his language to imitate this aesthetic arrangement exhibited by nature.

47. The O.E.D. credits Browne with the first English use of *decussate*, *decussated*, and *decussation*.

48. See Frank L. Huntley, "Sir Thomas Browne and the Metaphor of the Circle," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14 (June 1953), 353–66, esp. 363.

49. See Chapter 1, pp. 55, 63–64.

50. Owing to the importance of this passage to the conclusion of my book, and because the intricate twists and turns of Browne's emphatic logic and ecstatic conclusion can be seen best when reproduced in full, I quote this passage at length (and apologize for doing so).

51. *Browne: Works*, ed. Patrides, p. 378, n. 70. Huntley glossed the passage as follows (*Browne*, pp. 207–8): "Plato and Browne tell us to make two strips of paper into two circles, then place one circle within the other so that each bisects the other as the equator bisects the

meridian at zero and 180. Now we can easily perceive the two familiar adjuncts of the Greek theta, Θ, which is *thanatos* or death: the circle is God, perfection, immortality; the horizontal represents the corporal, divisible, death. . . . But constructing the Greek theta out of two strips of paper in solid rather than in plane geometry allows us to see a third adjunct: the quincunx, the chiasma, the cross, the only antidote (in Browne's Christian mind) to the opium of time."

52. On this and related symbols of eternity current in England during Browne's lifetime, see Huston Diehl, *An Index of Icons in English Emblem Books, 1500-1700* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), p. 191.

53. Cf. Interlude.

54. See Chapter 1, pp. 55, 57-58.

55. See above, pp. 3, 21, 23, 39.

56. Cf. Mazzeo, "Metaphysical Poetry and the Poetic of Correspondence," pp. 221-34; and Martin Elsky, "Bacon's Hieroglyphics and the Separation of Words and Things," *Philological Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (Fall 1984), 449-60.

57. Much of my thinking on this topic has been shaped by Edmund Husserl's concise articulation of this commonplace theme (and his ensuing analysis of it) in *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (1962; rpt., New York: Collier Books, 1975), sec. 44, p. 124: "A certain *inadequacy* belongs, further to the perception of things, and that too is an essential necessity. In principle a thing can be given only 'in one of its aspects,' and that means incompletely, in some sense or other imperfectly, but precisely that which presentation through perspectives prescribes."

58. See Gordon Keith Chalmers, "That Universal and Publick Manuscript," *Virginia Quarterly* 26 (Summer 1950), 425, which reminds us that Browne maintained what men call Fortune is actually the "cryptic and involved method" of God's providence, "directing the operations of individualls and single Essences . . . whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends in a more unknowne and secret way" (*R.M.* 1.17). And, on the imitation of "disposing providence" as the aim of literary works that use numerological patterning, see R. G. Peterson, "Critical Calculations: Measure and Symmetry in Literature," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 91 (May 1976), 374.

59. Heidegger, *Origin of the Work of Art*, p. 27.

60. While much can be learned from those who have applied or modified Heinrich Wölfflin's descriptive categories of artifice to literary works, I do not wish to resume the quarrel over terminology; rather, I am investigating what it is about the underlying structure of mnemonically oriented texts that encourages scholars to regard such works as fundamentally connected (see above, Chapter 1, n. 1). Because in what follows I will be referring quite specifically to a "baroque prose style," I would mention that I do so according to the useful (but by no means definitive) description by Morris Croll, "The Baroque Style in Prose," in *Studies in English Philology in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*, ed. Kemp Malone and Martin B. Ruud (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1929), pp. 427-56, esp. pp. 430-31. This essay, which elaborates the special meanings of "baroque" and "anti-Ciceronian" (or alternatively "Senecan" or "Attic"), and Croll's other studies which address the features of this literary style (1914 through 1929) have been collected and reprinted as *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm*, ed. J. Max Patrick (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). See also a related study, following and revising Croll, by George Williamson, *The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose Form from Bacon to Collier* (1948; rpt., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

61. Norman MacKenzie, "The Concept of Baroque and Its Relation to Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* and *Urn Burial*," *English Studies in Africa* 10 (September 1967), 151.

62. Shirley Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, p. 157.

63. Friedlander, *Rogier van der Weyden*, p. 29.

64. For a "reader-response" analysis of Browne's text (*Religio Medici*), see Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

65. On the iconographic program as it pertains to this particular work of art, see Chapter 4, pp. 179-81. On the implications of the artwork's "shining forth," I am indebted to John Sallis's translation of a complex passage in Heidegger, *Origin of the Work of Art*, sec. 2, p. 56: "The light thus disposed (put into place) fits its shining into the work. The shining fitted into the work is the Beautiful."

66. And thus we come full circle; see above, Preliminary Remarks, n. 21.

67. On Browne's belief that man is incapable of direct knowledge, see Margaret Jones-Davies, "Nabuchodonosor's Dream; or, The Defining of Reality in Sir Thomas Browne's Conception of Language," *English Language Notes* 19 (June 1982), 382-402. Cf. Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), regarding the accounting, in the human sciences, "for an unknown by means of a known, and at the same time it verifies that known by means of that unknown" (p. 121); and regarding anthropology as "that interpretation of man that already knows fundamentally what man is and hence can never ask who he may be" (p. 153).

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